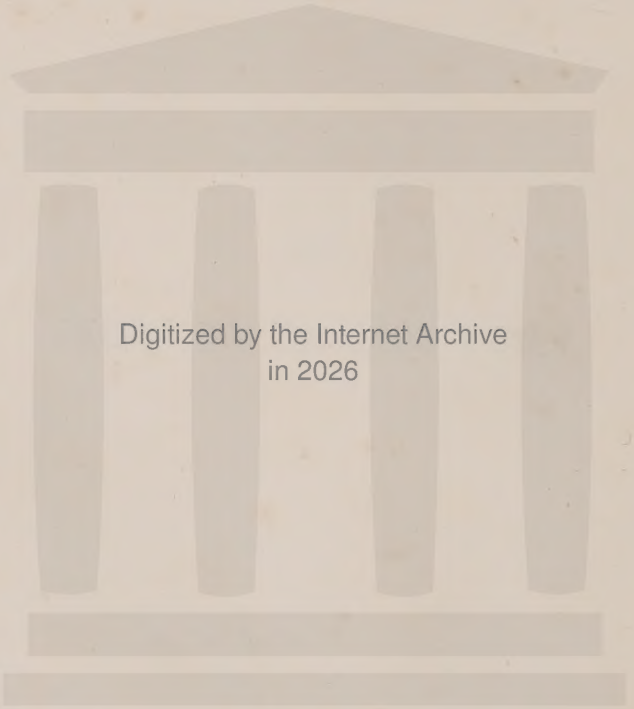
THE

EARLY RELIGION OF ISRAEL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THE

EARLY RELIGION OF ISRAEL

AS SET FORTH BY BIBLICAL WRITERS AND BY MODERN CRITICAL HISTORIANS

The Baird Lecture for 1889

BY

JAMES ROBERTSON, D.D.

PROFESSOR OF ORIENTAL LANGUAGES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

SECOND EDITION

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
EDINBURGH AND LONDON
MDCCCXCII

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE first impression of this book has been exhausted much sooner than I had anticipated. It would be premature to refer at length to the strictures of critics while the work is still under review; and, since any value that it may possess lies rather in the main argument presented than in the exhibition of details, I have judged it expedient to allow it to reappear in its original form, although I am well aware how much it admits of improvement.

I have no reason to complain of the criticisms the book has hitherto received. Some of them have been far too laudatory; and for the more adverse I was already prepared.

It may not be out of place to remind readers that I am not to be held as committed to all the views which, for the purpose of the discussion, are provisionally not disputed, or as considering certain lines of argument to be applicable only to the extent that they are here applied.

The aim of the book is not to vindicate any distinct place for the writer, but to stimulate the intelligent reader to think for himself; for I still believe that such a reader, though neither a Hebraist nor a trained critic, is quite competent to judge fairly on the main points of the argument which is here presented.

September 1892.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE substance of the following pages was delivered as the Baird Lecture in the spring of 1889. A good deal of matter is here presented which could not find expression within the limits of six lectures; and a division into chapters was found more convenient for the treatment of the different parts. The delay in publication has been occasioned, partly by the occupations of a somewhat laborious office, partly by broken health, which allowed me to take up the work only at long intervals. But, indeed, for other reasons I have not been forward to lay my views before the public. I am quite well aware how the current of opinion on Old Testament subjects is running; and I am not insensible to the fact that, while some may find fault with me for giving up received views, a greater number, and some who are younger than I, will "have me in derision" for not being abreast of the age.

Nevertheless, one must be fully persuaded in his own mind. I have long been convinced that the substantial

value of the books of the Old Testament does not depend upon our knowing their authorship; and I doubt whether we can ever accurately determine the circumstances of their composition. At the same time I am as firmly convinced that, in critical discussions on the Old Testament as these have been conducted, there is much more involved than the dates of books and the literary modes of their composition. Whatever may be said of the "traditional view" on these subjects, it is to be remembered that the "traditional view" of the history of the religion is the view of the Biblical writers; and if it is declared to be incorrect, our estimate of the value of the books must be considerably modified. It is this aspect of the critical inquiry that has chiefly engaged my attention. I have patiently and honestly tried to understand the position of critical writers, to follow the processes and to grasp the principles on which the historical inquiries have been conducted. But I find myself like one standing by the side of a Highland stream, while another more nimble goes over on improvised stepping-stones. He gets over, apparently dry-shod; but I cannot follow him, because the stepping-stones have been submerged by his weight. I look in vain to the critics for a passable road, with a firm bottom, which a man of plain understanding may tread. Many, no doubt, will call me unreasonable or stupid; but it may happen that not a few others are as dull as myself, if they would care to own it.

"Conservatism," it has been said,[1] "is the habitual attitude of Orientals." One poor orientalist here and

[1] Robertson Smith, Religion of the Semites, first series, p. 4.

there may be pardoned for having so much in common with them, when so many scholars are of another mind. I may plead, as a special excuse for my sympathy, the fact that I spent some dozen years—the years of life also during which one receives the most lasting impressions—in familiar intercourse with Orientals on the very borders of Palestine, where it would have been easy, so to speak, to get models for Old Testament portraits. When I found simple, unlettered people, with crude enough moralities and no lack of superstition, reasoning and talking like Old Testament characters, drawing the widest generalisations from the smallest incidents, and withal carrying about a habit of religion that commanded reverence, it never occurred to me to explain similar combinations or inconsistencies in Old Testament characters by contradictory traditions; nor did it seem at all incredible that a high tone of religious conception should be found in what might appear a primitive and rude age. In reading the Old Testament Scriptures, I seemed to be holding converse with living men; and I came to the conclusion that the best way to understand a book is to be in sympathy with the man that wrote it.

My interest in the subject, therefore, is not primarily of a dogmatic or theological character. I am less concerned to defend a theory than to claim for the Biblical writers—what I think they have not received—fair play. On both sides of the controversy, the books have been wrangled over, as if they had been some legal deed or Act of Parliament, while the personality of the writers has been left out of view. I am not opposed to criti-

cism, although I am free to confess I do not acknowledge Criticism in the sense in which it is sometimes spoken of, as if it were some infallible science. But I plead for a criticism of a saner sort, such as we should employ in the ordinary intercourse of life or apply to a modern author; a criticism that shall start by admitting that the writer possesses ordinary intelligence, and knows fairly well what he is writing about; that shall then interpret his words in a fair and common-sense fashion, and be bold enough, when necessary, to confess its own ignorance. If some things should be found in these pages indicating that I am incapable of following a critical argument as these arguments are conducted, they will at least be of some service if they stir up the unwary reader to examine the foundations of the arguments for himself. What is scepticism in one age becomes credulity in the next. The critical theory is fast becoming "traditional," and is being accepted by multitudes on no better grounds than those on which the former view became traditional. It is now high time to apply scepticism to the prevailing theory, so that the strength or weakness of its foundations may be made manifest.

After all the following chapters and most of the notes were in type, Professor Driver's important 'Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament' appeared. Though he does not profess to deal with the history, and it was no part of my design to treat of the structure of the books, yet the two lines of inquiry touch one another at certain points. I thought it better, however, to reserve for this place a brief reference to his work, and not to

modify what I had already written before I had an opportunity of seeing his conclusions. These conclusions, I may be allowed to say, are arrived at by a method that is admirable for its fairness in the treatment of details, and its cautious reserve in face of doubtful or conflicting evidence. So far as they relate to the composition and dates of the books, I am not particularly concerned with them; but I note with no little satisfaction statements in various connections which I take as indications that, both on this subject and in regard to the history of the religion, he holds much more moderate views than those of the prevailing school of critics. Thus, for example, he says: "The date at which an event, or institution, is first mentioned in writing must not be confused with that at which it occurred, or originated" (p. 118); and again—"The phraseology of P, it is natural to suppose, is one which had gradually formed; hence it contains elements which are no doubt ancient side by side with those which were introduced later," &c. (p. 148). So, while concluding that "the *completed* Priests' Code is the work of the age subsequent to Ezekiel," he is careful to add the qualification that "the chief ceremonial institutions of Israel are *in their origin* of great antiquity" (p. 135). Whether he would include in this category as many institutions as König accepts,[1] I cannot gather. It would, however, have been more satisfactory had both these critics indicated precisely on what evidence they rest their conclusions—evidence that would stand the test of such a rigorous criticism as they allow on other matters.

[1] See below, Note XXIX. p. 517 f.

Statements such as those I have quoted amount, in my opinion, to a set of critical canons quite different from those of Wellhausen; and Dr Driver would have been no more than just to himself if he had (as König has done) accentuated the difference.

Some other points, referred to in Professor Driver's Preface, will be found touched upon in the following pages. Thus I have "admitted that traditions are coloured to some extent by the age in which they find literary expression" (below, p. 128; cf. p. 424); and on the literary habit of placing speeches in the mouths of historical characters, I have stated my views at some length (chap. xvi.) I still adhere, however, after reading his remark (Pref., p. xvii), to what I have said in regard to the topographical accuracy of the Old Testament writers (p. 97 ff.), and think that the case might even be put more strongly.

To one other point touched upon in Professor Driver's Preface I feel constrained to refer—the relation of modern criticism of the Old Testament to the authority of the New Testament, and to the subject of inspiration. Were there nothing in dispute but the dates of books, the matter might be allowed to rest as he states it (p. xviii); but a much more serious issue has to be faced than the question what our Lord would have said had He been asked about the authorship of certain books. Without putting a hypothetical case as to what He would have said, I would ask the direct question, Whether the relation of the New Testament to the Old would be the same—whether Christianity, as a historically developed religion, would have equal

value to us—if, *e.g.*, Abraham be "a free creation of unconscious art," and a great part of the narratives of the Hexateuch "the fruit solely of late Jewish fancy," and if there be "not a particle of truth in the whole narrative" of something else? It is altogether inadequate to reply to such a question, that "criticism in the hands of Christian scholars does not banish or destroy the inspiration of the Old Testament; it *presupposes* it" (Pref., p. xix). Such scholars would do an invaluable service to the Church at the present time if they would explain what they mean by inspiration in this connection, and define wherein their position differs from that of critics who profess no such reverence for the Old Testament. I can quite well understand the position of one who should say it does not matter whether the Old Testament story is true or not, provided we can draw from it good religious instruction. So in a certain sense one might call the religious novel inspired Scripture. But the Christian scholar must be prepared to meet the objector who insists on meting out the same measure to the New Testament writers; for, in spite of what Professor Driver says (p. xvii), we are dependent upon the evangelists for the picture of the Christ, and, in the field of Old Testament history, critics find room for great "modifications of tradition" within the space of half a century, not to say more. So it is quite inadequate to the case when Horton, speaking of the Law and Christ's references to it, says,[1] "Now, supposing the book had been compiled actually by His contemporaries, this practical value of it would remain just what it is." For the question

[1] Inspiration and the Bible, p. 179.

recurs, Would the historical value of Christianity remain just what it is?

I have a strong conviction that it is their connection with a divinely guided history, more even than their high tone of teaching, that gives to the Old Testament books their special authority; and for this reason I regard it as most important to determine what the movement and character of the history were. Professor Briggs tells us [1] that the higher criticism can never determine whether the writings contain the Divine Word; but I think that, inferentially at least, it can. I believe a sober and unprejudiced criticism will show that Israel, at the dawn of its national existence, had a very exalted conception of God and a high rule of duty, and that these things were neither borrowed from their neighbours nor excogitated by themselves. If the inference is legitimate that they must have come "from above," then the writings which exhibit the process of this revelation contain no "cunningly devised fable," but have from their connection a divine character. Criticism, as an exercise of human reason, having come so far, may reverently give place to another faculty with a nobler name, by which divine things are "spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14).

[1] Biblical Study, p. 220.

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EARLY RELIGION OF ISRAEL.

INTRODUCTION.

Attitude of the reader of the English Bible to recent critical studies of the Old Testament—Preliminary difficulties of a technical kind—Attempt to present the argument in a new form—The fundamental matters in dispute are not questions of scholarship—The temptations of specialists—The final appeal must be to intelligent common-sense.

WITHIN recent years there has been such an advance in the critical study of the Old Testament that a perceptible change has taken place in the attitude of ordinary readers toward the whole subject. So long as the matters in dispute were questions as to the age, authorship, and mode of composition of certain books, particularly of the Pentateuch, and these subjects were handled simply or mainly as matters of technical criticism, the general reader, if he did not altogether abjure "unsettling" discussions, was perplexed by inquiries demanding special skill and training for their prosecution, or took little interest in problems which appeared to admit of the most diverse solutions. But since a thorough-going theory was adopted

by prominent critical writers, and especially since it was applied in the formal exhibition of the history of Israel from a new standpoint, the whole subject of Old Testament criticism has assumed a more pressing interest for the ordinary reader. The question of the history of books gives place to an inquiry into the history of a people; and the uninitiated reader is called upon, if not to determine the manner in which certain documents were composed, to pronounce an opinion upon the value of these documents as materials for understanding the course of Israel's religious history. Those who have made a special study of these matters have reached a stage at which they can exhibit the results of their investigations as a completed whole, and challenge the assent of others who have not the ability or the leisure to follow the processes for themselves. Dr Robertson Smith, in his preface to the English edition of Wellhausen's 'Prolegomena to the History of Israel' (p. viii), says: "In this as in other sciences, when the truth has been reached, it can generally be presented in a comparatively simple form, and the main positions can be justified even to the general reader by methods much less complicated, and much more lucid, than those originally followed by the investigators themselves." The same writer, while insisting on the fact that the matters with which Professor Wellhausen deals "are such as no intelligent student of the Old Testament can afford to neglect," claims (p. vi) that the book referred to "gives the English reader, for the first time, an opportunity to form his own judgment on questions which are within the scope of any one who reads the English Bible carefully, and is able to think clearly and without prejudice about its contents."

To what extent English readers have without prejudice

formed their own opinions on the matters in dispute it would be hard to say. There can be no doubt that not a few, while disclaiming all pretensions of being able to appreciate the technical critical arguments on which Wellhausen proceeds, profess themselves satisfied in their own minds that the scheme of Israel's history which he presents is in the main correct. Others, not prepared to go so far, have a general feeling that some reconstruction of the received views is needed; while others again, who have made some attempt to follow the arguments, are unable to come to any decision. It would not be fair to class all who accept the new theory among those "clever superficial men and women who think that everything has been found out, when next to nothing has been found out at all, who disbelieve in Authority, and do believe in 'authorities.'"[1] Yet perhaps the main reason for the ready assent on the part of some, and the hesitancy on that of others, is the fact that these investigations have been pursued by skilled Hebraists and critics, who are naturally supposed to have special means of determining the delicate questions involved. The results are set forth with such an array of learning and with so much confidence that the one class of readers give deference to authorities whom they take to be competent, while the other class decline to assent to a process of reasoning which they themselves are incapable of following.

For, notwithstanding the appeal to the ordinary reader of the English Bible, a great deal of preliminary investigation must have taken place before that point is reached at which such a reader is able to follow the critic; and much has to be taken as proved, because the process of argumenta-

[1] Andrew Lang in 'New Review,' August 1889.

tion is too intricate for those who are not specialists in this department of inquiry. The English reader, on taking up, for example, Wellhausen's book, comes upon a statement like this: "The assumptions I make will find an ever-recurring justification in the course of the investigation; the two principal are, that the work of the Jehovist, as far as the nucleus of it is concerned, belongs to the course of the Assyrian period, and that Deuteronomy belongs to its close."[1] Moreover, he finds himself on almost every page confronted with statements as to earlier and later elements of the same document, and assertions as to interpolations and later revisions; and he naturally concludes that it is from linguistic peculiarities and by purely scholarly processes that such distinctions are made. There is a continual assumption of something which the reader has been no party in establishing, a building upon foundations which are underground. Whether the assumptions are supported by arguments to which he would yield, whether the foundations are securely laid, he does not know. He must therefore either surrender himself to his critical guides, or get perplexed over the mass of intricate details.

It would manifestly be an advantage if the subject could be treated in such a way that the ordinary reader would, from the first, be able to appreciate the arguments employed. Since it is he who is called upon to give his verdict, he ought to have some firm ground on which to stand, some standard to which to appeal. If certain critical processes are necessary, those critical canons at least which control the processes should be distinctly laid

[1] Prolegomena to the History of Israel, p. 13. For brevity, the English translation of this work is in the sequel referred to as Wellhausen's 'History of Israel.'

down and accepted as valid. If certain books, or portions of books, for example, are rejected as unhistorical and untrustworthy, or if certain passages are declared to be interpolations or additions, the ordinary reader ought to be satisfied on what grounds this critical sifting is exercised. If he is told that this is done on scholarly grounds, of whose validity he is incapable of forming an opinion, it comes to this, that the advocate of the theory constitutes himself the judge also, and there is no case for the jury. But it may turn out that the critical processes in question are controlled by canons of whose validity the ordinary reader is quite competent to judge. Either, therefore, the processes themselves and the conclusions drawn from them must be entirely left aside at the outset, or else they must be able to justify themselves to the plain reason of the ordinary reader. It is the advocate's aim to maintain his thesis, but it is the duty of the jury to see that it is sustained on proper evidence. The appeal to the ordinary reader is nugatory unless he is put in possession of a standard by which to judge.

In the following chapters an attempt is made to approach the subject in such a manner that an intelligent reader of the English Bible may not be placed at a disadvantage, and to present the questions in dispute in such a shape that he will be able from the first to follow the argument. This of course implies starting from neutral and undisputed ground. The reader must be prepared to hold in abeyance any prepossessions to which he may have been accustomed: if he is not to defer to "authorities," neither must he rely on bare "Authority." And there are certain circumstances favourable to such a mode of procedure at the present time. For one thing, the heat of controversy in regard to many points in dis-

pute has so far subsided that it has become possible to look calmly at certain conclusions, the bare enunciation of which not long ago stirred up angry feelings. The claim of criticism to deal with such questions has been acknowledged, and ordinary people are able without passion to consider the arguments which are urged in support of theories which may be very much at variance with received views. And then there is this other great advantage, that the modern theory of Israel's history can now be exhibited as a completed whole, and, taken merely as a hypothesis, can be brought to the test of admitted phenomena and facts. "It is always something to be thankful for when, in any department of human knowledge, a hypothesis is adequately stated, defended, and worked out. If it turn out an error, it is an error to which full justice has been done, and which may be finally put aside."[1] The only way, however, in which the truth or error of a hypothesis can be shown, is to apply it to the explanation of actual phenomena—that is, in a case like the present, to bring it to the test of certain undisputed facts of literature and history, in face of which it has to justify itself. Accordingly, the method of our inquiry is to take our stand at certain clearly marked points in history or undisputed phenomena of literature, and to ask what account is given of them respectively by the Biblical writers and by modern historians of Israel. Such an inquiry is not beyond the ability of the intelligent reader of the English Bible; in its prosecution he will be able, at all events, to distinguish between what demands technical skill for its settlement, and what appeals to ordinary sound reason.

The essential and fundamental matters in dispute in

[1] A. B. Bruce in 'Present Day Tracts,' No. 38, p. 55.

this controversy are not questions of "scholarship" at all, in the proper sense of that term. It so happens, as a matter of course, that the men who have gone most thoroughly into these questions have been trained Hebraists; but the bare facts of a linguistic character with which they have to deal, count for very little in the essential questions at issue, as critical writers themselves have confessed.[1] These writers are specialists, it is true, but specialists dealing with matters in which common-sense may follow them, observe their processes, and pronounce upon their validity. Specialists are very prone to become theorists, and a specialist with a theory is a very unsafe guide when questions of evidence have to be settled. Modern critical writers are in the habit of pointing to the shifts which in past times have been resorted to in order to maintain some traditional theory that was untenable; and too much occasion has been given them to do so. But a little sense of humour might enable them to perceive the ridiculousness of many of the processes carried on in all seriousness in the name of criticism. The Hebrew scholar or trained critic may, by the very possession of his special qualifications, see possible combinations, and suggest possible constructions or emendations of a passage that the ordinary reader would never dream of; and he may combine and transpose and eliminate and amend, and by a triumph of ingenuity bring out a most unexpected result, while all the time perhaps a simple and plain meaning of a phrase or passage stares him in the face, from which, however, he gets away to one quite recondite or fanciful. An old Eastern friend of mine used to say there were people who, when asked "Where is your ear?" would put their right hand over

[1] See Note I.

the top of their head and triumphantly seize hold of their left ear. There is an acrobatic criticism, which is more sensational than sensible. The qualifications of the specialist render him peculiarly prone to push a theory at all hazards, when to common-sense it appears manifestly overweighted. Too much praise cannot be given to Continental critics for their perseverance, but perseverance may be carried too far. Some years ago I was amused and instructed by the industry and ingenuity of a waggoner at Leipzig, whose cart, heavily laden, had stuck fast in deep sand. After every ordinary expedient had been tried in vain, he went away, evidently to some distance, and returned with a powerful screw-lever, by the help of which the wheels were sufficiently raised to admit of the insertion of planks for rails; and so, after a long delay, he drove off without lightening his waggon. Recently I had an opportunity of observing the method of a Glasgow carter in a similar difficulty. He had inconsiderately placed his lorry on soft yielding ground, and loaded it with timber from the Exhibition buildings. As soon as he realised his position, he unloaded his cart, drew it on to firm ground a few yards off, replaced the same amount upon it, and drove off in a few minutes. Both men succeeded at last, but I confess I admired the method of lightening the cart when the ground was insecure. When difficulties increase at every step of a hypothesis, it is time to inquire whether the hypothesis itself is not at fault.

One indispensable qualification for pursuing an inquiry like the present, is that knowledge of human nature and sympathy with it which we call common-sense. There is, Matthew Arnold tells us,[1] a *mechanical* criticism,

[1] God and the Bible, chap. iii. *ad init.*

which "takes for granted that things are naturally all of a piece, and follow one uniform rule; and that to know that this is so, and to judge things by the light of this knowledge, is the secret for sure criticism. People do not vary; people do not contradict themselves; people do not have undercurrents of meaning; people do not divine. If they are represented as having said one thing to-day and its seeming opposite to-morrow, one of the two they are credited with falsely. If they are represented as having said what in its plain literal acceptation would not hold good, they cannot have said it. If they are represented as speaking of an event before it happened, they did not so speak of it,—the words are not theirs." Such a criticism, as he says, is, for negative purposes, particularly useful; and it may be prosecuted so as to bring out very surprising results. But a very ordinary knowledge of human nature and experience of human life will be sufficient to show that conclusions drawn in this way are quite precarious or even repugnant to common-sense. Whatever view is ultimately to prevail in regard to the subject of which we have now to treat, must commend itself to the general intelligence of ordinary thinking people. There are questions raised which are of much deeper than merely antiquarian interest—questions that have usually been associated very closely with the sanctions of religion and with matters of practical life. It is of vital importance that the views held on such subjects should be gained by intelligent conviction. For practical use they are of no more value if received on the authority of scholars and experts than if accepted by tradition or custom. Nor need there be any fear of the result of an appeal on such subjects to the common-sense of reflecting people, who are neither tied fast to a tradi-

tional theory nor liable to be sophisticated by plausible special pleading. The verdict may be that views long held require to be considerably modified; it may also be that much that is now put forward as certain is at least very doubtful. But the inquiry, if conducted honestly, can only tend to the advancement of truth.

CHAPTER I.

THE RELIGIOUS CHARACTER OF THE HISTORY OF ISRAEL.

Place of Israel among the nations of antiquity—Land, literature, institutions—The distinctive feature of the history is the religion—Its world-wide influence: modern Judaism, Christianity, Islam—"National religions and universal religions"—As a matter of history the religion of Israel is "something more" than other principal religions—The question is, What is the difference? and for an answer we must go back to the earlier times.

THE history of Israel has attractions such as no other history presents. No nation ever had so wonderful a beginning; none exhibits a more tragic close. The figures that mark the stadia of its checkered history are not the dim shadowy forms that elsewhere meet us in antiquity, but men of warm human sympathy, with strongly marked individuality. The details of the lives of Old Testament worthies have wrought themselves into all literatures, and made themselves the world's possession. People in modern Christian lands are more familiar with the history of Israel than with the ancient history of their own countries, and feel more interest in the characters of Old Testament story than in the great men of their own nations. The graphic delineations of patriarchs and heroes take powerful hold of the imagination of the old and young in all lands. The

missionary to the heathen finds a ready access to the minds of his hearers by means of the simple and impressive recital of the deeds of Israel's great men. And in the battles for religious freedom and national righteousness, reformers have been nerved by the example of Old Testament patriots and prophets to fight manfully for the truth.

The very land which was the home of Israel is unique in its geographical and topographical features. A piece of territory no larger than Wales embraces within itself the climate, natural scenery, and products of lands the most far apart. By its physical features and natural boundaries it is as sharply marked off from adjacent lands, as it is distinguished from any country of its size on the face of the earth. Within this territory, debarred for the most part from the seaboard, lived a people that was contemporaneous with the great world-empires of antiquity, but in true greatness has infinitely surpassed them. Looked at as one of the nationalities of Western Asia, its external history seemed indeed to run a course parallel with theirs. A number of kindred tribes are federated together, and after a time the monarchy arises. Then a schism takes place, and there is a double line of kings, waging their wars and ruling their states very much after the fashion of the kings around them. The institutions, the priesthood, the ritual, the language of Israel, bear strong resemblances to those of kindred Semitic peoples in their neighbourhood; and finally, when the great world-powers absorb those other nationalities or sweep them away, the Israelitish state is also shattered, and its people disappears from the scene. Yet, looked at more closely, Israel presents a broad contrast to those smaller kindred states, and is in essential points clearly distinguished from the greater world-empires. For Israel has not ceased to exist, and its influ-

ence has gone forth into all the earth. The petty nationalities of kindred blood in the immediate neighbourhood have disappeared, leaving scarcely a trace of their existence. The great empires of Assyria and Egypt, whose armies fought across the body of Israel for world-dominion, have crumbled to ruins. The Roman empire, with its iron heel, trampled the Jewish nationality to the ground, but there was a vitality which it could not crush. Greece, like Palestine, was a small country, and its people, like Israel, played a distinguished part in the world's history. Israel, however, had put on record complete annals of its marvellous career before the time that the "father of history" appeared in Greece;[1] and though possessing neither the art, nor the philosophy, nor the science of ancient Egypt, has effected in the world what neither Greece with all these acquirements, nor Rome with its law, nor the Eastern empires with their massive force, could accomplish.

Something very distinctive must have been early achieved or acquired by Israel to enable it to remain apart from these nationalities, great or small, and to outlast them so conspicuously. It was something of a more fundamental kind than the ordinary attainments of civilisation—something nearer to the heart of mankind, belonging in a manner to all ages, and destined to last when the strait bonds of Jewish nationality should have been snapped, and when the greatest of world-empires should have done their best and their worst for the human race. By some inherent force this race, set in the midst of the great nations of the earth, and surrounded by powerful em-

[1] The date of Herodotus is 484-443 B.C.; Ezra came to Jerusalem in the year 458. The pre-Socratic period of Greek philosophy falls between 550 and 430 B.C.; the books of Hosea and Amos date from before the fall of Samaria in 721 B.C.

pires, not only held its independent national existence, and maintained itself unaffected in the highest degree by world influences, speaking its own language, practising its own customs, observing its own laws, proudly regarding itself as a race destined to highest distinction and even to world-dominion, but even at the moment of its political extinction held aloft the banner of national supremacy and undying hope. Nor have its expectations been falsified. Scattered to the four winds of heaven, trodden down as the mire of the streets, persecuted in strange lands, wandering from end to end of a continent in search of a resting-place, it has remained one in all that constituted its unity before its independence was lost. Even in this cosmopolitan age, when men of every nationality are becoming daily more and more citizens of the world, and when the modern Jew of Britain, or America, or Germany, or France, makes it his poor boast that he is an Englishman, an American, a German, or a Frenchman, his very speech bewrayeth him, and he is classed as a member of the one race which is the scorn of many, the dread of some, the wonder of all. For, as a nation or race, the Jewish people lives on, and has a definite influence on the events of contemporary history; and this though it is a nation without a home and without independent political existence. It is a great thing to have the control, to the extent that they enjoy, of the money which is intimately bound up with the prosecution of any undertaking, literary, commercial, or philanthropic, to be the arbiters of war or peace, the masters of the Exchange. The modern movement against the Jews in some parts of Europe, though it may have its root in the very thing we have indicated, shows also that the influence of this wonderful race is not merely monetary but intellectual. Even if it is

their possession of wealth that gives them the advantage, the genius that could create the wealth, and so manipulate it as to maintain pre-eminence, is evidently a power of a high degree. To instruct the world in the worship of Mammon, after having taught it the knowledge of God, is no common achievement. A power like this, without political independence at its back, implies an inner uniting bond of no common kind; and when we ask what that bond is, we are driven back to the earlier history of the people for an answer. The possession of wealth by the race is of comparatively modern origin, brought about by their exclusion from the ordinary trades and professions, which were practised in the times when they suffered persecution at the hands of Christians. But the bond that unites them is of much older date: they had become a historic people, and had indeed achieved the best part of their history, before their corporate life had assumed this special phase. Persecution had its chief motive in their distinctiveness, and largely tended to perpetuate it.

The bond which united this people and enabled them to achieve their distinction in the world was a religious one; and the specific contribution of ancient Israel to the world's good was the knowledge of their religion. "The foundation upon which, at all periods, Israel's sense of its national unity rested, was religious in its character."[1] "The history of Israel is essentially a history of religious ideas."[2] The great Eastern empires, by a crushing despotism, welded peoples into kingdoms of colossal size, and prepared a field upon which more civilising influences could have play when the fit time arrived. The people of Israel attained no such empire, and left no such remains of

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 433.
[2] Stade, Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol. i. p. 12.

greatness as these empires exhibit. Their territory even at the largest was but small; they remained but a short time in these limited dominions; and their country, when they left it, became a No-man's-land, whose inhabitants at the present day own a foreign master, and have no attachment to it beyond an instinctive clinging to the soil that supports them. Rome gave the world a system of law which remained an active influence throughout Europe after the great Roman empire was shattered. Greece died in giving birth to immortal art, poetry, and science. Ancient Israel, on the contrary, never cultivated art nor distinguished itself in philosophy; and, so far from seeking to influence the great world, kept jealously aloof from its movements. What Israel has given to the world is a literature of a very peculiar kind, intensely national in the first place, instinct with an eloquence and a poetry of its own kind; but above all, and herein specifically different from all other national literatures, permeated from beginning to end with religion. From a very ancient time writers in this nation have set themselves to give the story, and a connected story, of their own rise and growth, to codify the laws, to put on record the words and deeds of teachers and leaders; and whether or not a part, great or small, of such ancient literature has been lost, one feature characterises what we possess, it is of a religious cast, and national only because it is religious. A nation is historical only when it makes history, and a nation records its history only when it becomes conscious that it has a history to record; and therefore the earliest of these records which have this national and religious tone, prove that at the time of their composition Israel had a consciousness of its own significant position in the world, and a belief that its history was worthy of being recorded.

"The self-consciousness of the religion of Israel," says Dr A. B. Davidson,[1] "is a phenomenon almost more singular than the religion itself." Of course it is to be admitted that the existence of such writings, when once they did exist, had much to do with the making and moulding of the succeeding history; but the fact of their existing is first of all a proof that the nation was conscious that it had some great part to play.

Yet the religion which was the bond uniting Israel and giving that people their peculiar position in the world, is not a dry system enshrined in ancient documents to furnish study for the archæologist. Other nations of the ancient world had their religious systems, expounded by philosophers, guarded by priests, supported by the state, adorned with the ritual which the highest art could elaborate. These religions, however, faded from the view of the world with the decadence of the peoples who professed them, and are now painfully restored from forgotten writings and crumbling monuments; and even when recovered seem at best but like distant echoes of the religion of Israel. This, like the people themselves, has never ceased to be in evidence before the world, endued with endless vitality, and is operating at the present day in a wider field than its first professors ever dreamed of. We know how the religious systems of Greece and Rome crumbled to powder before the preaching of Jewish missionaries, men of little learning and of no social position; and how all that was best in the art and political life of the most civilised nations of antiquity has been made subservient to the spread of a religion which came from despised Judæa.

For not only does the world owe to Israel the religion

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. vi. p. 165.

of the Old Testament, which for the time was clearly distinguishable from the religions of contemporaneous nations, but to the religion of Israel we must trace back by direct descent the two greatest religions of succeeding times, Christianity and Mohammedanism. These two, with Buddhism, exhibit the highest attainments of the human race in the matter of religion; to them, as distinguished from merely local and national religions, has been given the name of Universal or World religions, because there is something in their character, as proved by their reception and spread, that fits them for peoples of various climes and of various race. Buddhism, no doubt, so far as numbers go, bulks more largely on the map of the world than Islam, yet as a factor in the great world's history it has not had so distinguished a career; it has been more a religion of thought than of action. And then, in its adaptation to the wants of man of every grade of civilisation, of every tribe and tongue, in the spirituality of its teaching and in its living power, Christianity, as the history of the world shows, occupies a place peculiarly its own.

It is a matter of history, which very few question, that both these religions are traceable directly to the religion of Israel.[1] There may be differences in the modes in which the influence is traced, and as to the precise amount of the dependence; but there can be no question that both Jesus and His apostles represented the faith of Abraham as the foundation of Christianity,[2] and that Mohammed appealed to the same spiritual ancestor, declaring that Abraham was neither a Jew nor a Christian, but a Muslim.[3] Thus two

[1] Kuenen, National Religions and Universal Religions, p. 56.
[2] Renan, Hist. du Peuple d'Israel, i., Pref. p. iii.
[3] The Koran, Sura ii 60.

religions, which have been intimately bound up with the political and social movements of the world, which have subjugated to themselves nations in the foremost rank of intelligence, which have proved themselves adapted to peoples of the most diverse birth and training, and which are at the present moment rivalling one another in the missionary zeal with which they are propagated, are directly founded upon the religion of old Israel, which never was anything more than the religion of a small and isolated people. Mohammed gave forth the Koran as "a warning to all creatures,"[1] and even in his lifetime sent a peremptory summons, prophet of Arabia as he was, to both the King of Persia and the Emperor of Constantinople, as well as to other minor potentates, to accept the religion of Islam. And the command of Jesus, in fulfilment of which His followers travelled in all directions and suffered every hardship, was: "Go ye into all the world, and make disciples of all nations." But though claiming direct descent from Israel's religion, they have this very point in sharp contrast to it, that they both very soon became universal religions, whereas it remained, and still remains, a religion of one people. We have instances of the religion of Israel coming under the view of other nations, as in the story of Jonah; and there were, no doubt, all along, foreign converts to the Hebrew faith. But never did the religion of Israel set about a propaganda; it was only in late times, when the faiths of the pagan world were dying away, that in sickness of heart the religiously minded of the Gentiles became proselytes to Judaism, and found it a stepping-stone to Christianity. Yet though the faith of Israel remained restricted to one race, not only did it by direct genealogy bring forth the two great missionary

[1] The Koran, Sura xxxviii. 87.

religions, but it gave unmistakable intimations that the truth which it contained would have world-wide extension. As if conscious, on the one hand, that they were proclaiming imperishable and universal truth, its writers gave the most glowing anticipations of a latter day of glory, when out of Zion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem—the word which would lead all nations to walk in the light of the Lord. On the other hand, as if conscious that this truth was for the time held in too narrow bonds for acceptance by all nations, they abstained from pressing it upon the Gentiles, and were content to hold up the witness through the long years of waiting till the fulness of the time should come.

A consideration of such facts as these will have a certain influence on the mode in which we have to approach the religion of Israel, as will be indicated presently. They have been pointed out in the meantime as outstanding features of the subject, which invest the religious history of Israel with peculiar interest, and have always attracted the attention of thinkers and scholars in an uncommon degree. Just as in the New Testament history, where the life of Jesus has been felt to be the key-stone of the whole structure, writers of every shade of opinion have taken in hand to explain His influence on the succeeding development of Christianity; so in the field of Old Testament inquiry the greatest industry and the keenest ingenuity have been exercised in the attempt to account for the origin of that peculiarly religious cast of thought, which is so observable in the Hebrew literature. The very earliest attempts at Old Testament criticism had their point of departure in dogmatic considerations; and though for a time the labours of scholars assumed a more technically critical and literary aspect, the historical view

was never entirely lost sight of, and has of late again dominated the whole process of criticism. Even the works which profess to deal in the most technical manner with the Old Testament books have at their basis a theory of the Old Testament history; and of recent years we have had an increasing number of attempts to set forth the history in a more formal manner according to the principles of historical criticism, till we have almost as many Histories of Israel, and from as varied standpoints, as we have Lives of Jesus. It is not without reason that M. Renan—who, according to his own estimate, would have anticipated the discoveries of Darwin had he given himself in early life to the study of physical science,[1] and who now almost regrets that he had not devoted his lifetime to the history of Greek thought[2]—after working out for forty years a design of his earlier years to write 'The History of the Origins of Christianity,' closes his lifelong labour with the 'History of the People of Israel.'[3]

A religion which has had a history like this, and has attracted such attention from investigators, proves itself thereby to have more than common features, and cannot be approached with indifference. It is true that the most of the modern writers who have undertaken histories of Israel make great professions of impartiality and freedom from prejudice. Thus Kuenen in the opening of his 'Religion of Israel' says[4]: "Our standpoint is sketched in a single stroke, as it were, by the manner in which this work sees the light. It does not stand entirely alone, but is one of a number of monographs on 'the principal

[1] Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse, p. 263.
[2] Hist. d'Israel, i., Pref. p. vi ff.
[3] See Note II.
[4] Eng. transl., vol. i. p. 5.

religions.' For us the Israelitish is one of these religions, nothing less, but also nothing more." This sounds exceedingly impartial, but he "doth protest too much, methinks." It may be questioned whether this is not an assuming of a standpoint from which it is impossible to give a sufficient account of the matter in hand. If it be indeed possible for one to regard all religions with perfect impartiality as so many phases of man's activity, we may expect from such a one an even-handed treatment of all; but such an impartiality is very apt to run into an equalising and levelling of all. At all events, for those who regard Christianity as occupying a peerless position among the "principal religions," and who have perceived the way in which it appeals to the religion of the Old Testament, it would be vain to pretend to have no prepossession in the matter. It is not necessary that the historian of a country should be a foreigner; and we prefer that a biographer should be one who was intimately acquainted and in sympathy with the person whose character is to be described. A handful of jewels are, from one point of view, just so many minerals; but we should think none the less of a lapidary whose eyes sparkled when he discovered among them "one pearl of great price." A joiner or cabinetmaker may say that from his standpoint three planks of wood are nothing less and nothing more, though one may be cut from the trunk and the others from large limbs of the same tree; and the anatomist may describe simply as so many "subjects" the dead bodies of a mother and her two daughters. From their standpoint they are right enough; the question is as to the standpoint. Religions are not so many things that may be laid on the bench or dissecting-table, so that learned men may write a series of

monographs upon them. They are not so many dry systems that can be circumscribed by "documents" and examined in books. No religion that has made its mark in the world can be thus appreciated. Account must be taken of the character of the founders and first teachers, as well as of the doctrines or systems they have left; and above all, the effects of the religion in the world must in each case be estimated, if we would know what the power of the religion is. Now the religion of Israel, by its *very position in the world*, has been "something more" in some sense than other religions. No other religion has had so striking an origin, so persistent an existence, and so wide an influence, if we take into account the two religions which have sprung from it. And the main question before a historian of Israel's religion is to make plain what the "something more" is. But to set out with a formula or equation that will represent the history of all religions,[1] and then apply it to the religion of Israel, is to prejudge the whole question in a most unscientific way, and to run in the teeth of historical fact. The science of comparative religion is legitimate, and most useful; but it becomes unscientific when it is a levelling science. Stade very properly[2] assigns to the religion of Israel not only a place among the principal religions, but the very first place, — the universal religion, in a much fuller sense than, *e.g.*, the philosophy of Greece or the law of Rome can claim to be universal. There is enough in the external history of Israel to prepare us for finding in it something very different from what other ancient religions exhibit. Is it impossible that there should be unique things in the world? Is it scientific to assert that there are not? We

[1] See Note III. [2] Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol. i. pp. 3, 4.

do not require at the outset to claim more for this religion than for other religions; but neither are we allowed to assume at the outset that it is no more nor better than others. What we have seen is sufficient at least to make us disposed to admit any features that can clearly be proved to exist, even though they have no counterpart in other ancient religions. Since it has, in later historic time, had a unique development, it need be no wonder if in its earlier course it was equally distinguished.

The history of Israel, then, resolves itself into a history of the religion; and the problem of the history is to explain the possession by this people of a faith and practice which distinguished them from their neighbours, and made them the religious teachers of the world. More particularly, it is to the earlier portion of the history that attention has to be turned, with the view of discovering, if possible, a starting-point which will form a sufficient explanation of all that followed.

If we take the modern orthodox Jew with his Talmud and traditions, we can give no account of him, nor understand his persistent adherence to peculiar customs and old-world beliefs, till we go back to the time of the formation of the Talmud itself. And as soon as we begin to investigate that process, we are compelled to go back to Ezra and his contemporaries, who gave the start to the complicated work of the scribes. And when we take up the books that tell us of the activity of Ezra and Nehemiah, and try to account for their influence, we find we are not only at the beginning of one course of development, but also at the end of a long anterior one. A great part of the writings of the Old Testament was by that time certainly in existence; the political history of the nation in its independence had run its course, and

its religious character had become well marked. In order to discover how all this was brought about, we are referred to an earlier period of their history. We turn to the great prophets who lived and wrote before the exile, and we find that, while their conceptions of the national religion are clear and positive, they do not regard the religion as a thing of their own day, nor claim to have reached it by their own study. The very earliest of the writing prophets to whose words we have access, appeal to a series of prophetic men before them who had taught the same truths, and presuppose for the nation of Israel a certain religious standing which rests on an antecedent history to which they pointedly and repeatedly refer. Attempting to make our way still farther back, we find the books which tell of the activity of Moses, the exodus from Egypt, and the consolidation of the people under an elaborate system of law; and we seem to have reached an absolute commencement. But even the Mosaic period rests on an earlier. Moses speaks in the name of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the same books that tell of the work of the great lawgiver are full of references to the covenant and the promise made to Abraham. With Abraham the history of Israel as a people is made by the Old Testament writers to begin. From him the nation is made to descend by ordinary generation; the promise made to him is seen expanding in the succeeding history; and although the writers give an account of ages preceding, and carry their history back to the very origin of things, Abraham is made to stand at the watershed where the national life of Israel has its rise, the "nations" of the world being thereafter left out of account, or only referred to in connection with the fortunes of the chosen people.

What we want to determine is the origin of this peculiarly religious cast of the history of Israel, and the nature of the religious life which is represented as running this long uninterrupted course. And in order to do this, it is of the utmost consequence to secure a firm standing-ground from which to estimate the precise course of events.

CHAPTER II.

TWO CONTENDING THEORIES OF THE HISTORY.

There are practically two accounts given of the earlier religion of Israel, that of the Biblical writers and that of modern critics, and in vital points they are opposed—The Old Testament books agree, or have been made to agree, in their statement of a scheme—Its outlines—Modern objection to this view that it is an afterthought—Contending theory advanced by critics—Its outline—The contrast—How is the balance to be held between them, since both appeal to the same books?—Proposal to leave aside at the outset the disputed books or portions—Reasons given for this method—Proceeding from the known and admitted to the unknown or disputed—The result will, among other things, determine the value of the books which at the outset are left out of account.

We have seen that the history of Israel resolves itself into a history of religious ideas. The outstanding events of the nation's history are all invested by the Biblical writers with religious significance; and it is through its religion that Israel is still a power in the world. A history of this people which should be confined to political events would be as unsatisfactory and as uninteresting as a history of Greece which should take no account of art, philosophy, or science. The vital point is to determine, if possible, what was the nature of the earlier religion of this people.

There are, practically, two accounts given of the history

of Israel's earlier religion, between which we have to choose,[1] and they are, in important respects, opposed to each other. There is the account of the Biblical writers, which may be gathered from the Old Testament books. Whatever, and however many, may be the original sources of which the Pentateuch and historical books are composed, and in whatever particulars the various sources may be found to be divergent or discordant among themselves, they all agree, or have been manipulated so as to have the appearance of agreeing, in the main view which they exhibit of the course through which the history ran. These books, in addition to an account of primeval history contained in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, have, in the remainder of that book and in the succeeding books to the end of 2 Kings, a connected narrative of the fortunes of Israel from the call of Abraham to the time of the Captivity; and the books of Ezra and Nehemiah record the events connected with the return. Besides these, there are other writings, particularly those of the prophets, which have for the most part their known historical dates, and are therefore valuable contributions to the Biblical account of the history. Now the account which all these books together give of the history is ostensibly consistent and of one tenor.[2] It amounts to this: that the people of Israel, from the time of Abraham, stood in a peculiar relation to God, and received from Him special intimations of His will and character, and were by Him peculiarly guided and directed in their growth into a nation, and

[1] See Note IV.

[2] The books of Chronicles are confessedly of late date, and stand in some respects by themselves. Whatever may be said of their historic value in detail, they rest on the earlier books and imply the same general scheme of history.

in their existence as a state. By a signal display of divine power they were delivered from the bondage of Egypt and led into the desert of Sinai, where the covenant made with Abraham was renewed with awful sanctions. Upon the covenant was reared the law, ordaining holiness on God's people, fencing round their daily life with ceremonial prescriptions, and educating their spiritual life, so that they might be in deed as in ideal a kingdom of priests, an holy nation. Up to this ideal, however, they never came. On the contrary, they sinned under the very shadow of Sinai; and throughout the course of their journey in the wilderness, marked as it was by constant tokens of divine guidance, they exhibited continual backsliding, and fell into one corruption after another. Even when, by signal displays of divine favour, they were brought into the promised land and made victorious over its inhabitants, they sinned against the God who had favoured them, and conformed to the practices of their neighbours. Nevertheless they were not rejected, nor was their education interrupted. A series of prophets, from Samuel's time onwards, arose to testify against them and to plead for a higher life. These men, with one voice, whether in the northern or the southern kingdom, tell the same tale of God's great doings for His people in the past; they reprove, rebuke, exhort; they confront kings and people, and denounce priests and false prophets alike,—the burden of their message being the same from age to age. Nor do they lose faith in God's promise. As troubles gather about the nation, their reproof of sin becomes more stern, their enforcement of God's righteousness more emphatic, but their trust in His faithfulness remains unshaken. As the fabric of the nation falls to pieces, their views be-

come only the more spiritual, and hope lives on even in captivity. It was indeed the voice of prophecy and the belief in its fulfilment that sustained the captives in Babylon, and stimulated the pious under Ezra and Nehemiah to return to their native land, and there, cured finally of idolatry, to set up the worship of God with punctilious regard to the precepts of the old law, which, during their prosperity, had been slighted.

Such is the view presented in the Biblical books. It involves a plan or scheme of history of a sort. It is a record of a religious movement proceeding in close connection with certain alleged historical occurrences, which to the Biblical writers are of prime significance; so that in their estimation the different stadia in the religious advance are marked by definite events in the national life. I have said that the narrative contained in the Biblical books is ostensibly consistent and of one tenor; and the proof of this is the fact that till recently no one thought that any other account could be derived from these books of what the various writers unanimously meant to represent. Indeed those who in modern times think they have proved that the course of the history was different, do not deny that the Biblical books, as they lie before us, give the account which has just been sketched. What they maintain is, that the scheme of the Biblical writers is an afterthought, which by a process of manipulation of older documents, and by a systematic representation of earlier events in the light of much later times, has been made to appear as if it were the original and genuine development; and they think they are able, by separating the early from the late constituents of the writings, and by a legitimate process of criticism, to prove from the Biblical documents themselves,

that the history and the religious movement had quite a different course.

On purely literary and scientific grounds we cannot at the outset refuse to entertain such a supposition. The books of the Old Testament lie before us as so many literary compositions, and we cannot in advance claim for them such authority as will bar any legitimate inquiry into their origin, and any legitimate criticism of them as literary productions. It is in itself a legitimate supposition that the writers of the Old Testament books, living and moving in a narrow world of their own, took a circumscribed view of their national history, and in a simple unscientific age saw marvels where modern writers would see only natural occurrences. It is also quite conceivable that Hebrew writers of history, like other historians, had their views of past occurrences coloured by the medium of their own time through which they regarded them, and at a comparatively late time framed a theory of their past history, in accordance with what succeeding events led them to believe it must have been. And finally, it is conceivable that such late writers should for the first time have set themselves to put down an account of early events from their own standpoint, or have touched up older documents in order to make them square with their own conceptions. Whether all this was indeed the case must of course be proved before we accept it; in the meantime we cannot refuse to look at it as a hypothetical account of the matter. Nor need we wonder if, in an age like the present, when the demand is made in every department of investigation for scientific processes and strict verification of facts, the theory of the Biblical writers should be challenged to submit itself to the scrutiny of nineteenth-century examination. Neither need

we wonder if men who are trained in the methods of modern historical research, and who have made the religions of the world a subject of special study, have sought to frame a theory of Israel's history in accordance with what they regard as established scientific principles. Of course it will be required of the modern theory that it give a better account of all the facts of the case, and present on the whole a more consistent and credible explanation of the things which are not matters of dispute.

We shall have occasion in the sequel to consider the main points of the theory that has been put forward in opposition to the Biblical one. In detail there are variations in the views held by different writers; but in a general way the modern theory may be stated as follows: A number of wandering Hebrew tribes came from the desert and found a settlement in Canaan. Like the races around them they had their national God, Jahaveh,[1] who was to them very much what Chemosh was to Moab or

[1] In using this name for the first time, I must make a brief explanation. It is now universally admitted that the traditional pronunciation, Jehovah, which appears in our English Bible, is a mistake. By the time the vowel-points were supplied to the Hebrew Bible the Jews had acquired the habit of saying *Adhonai*, the LORD, wherever the sacred tetragrammaton (JHVH) occurred, and to guide to this reading they wrote the vowels of the name *Adhonai* along with the consonants of the unpronounced name. Taken as a Hebrew name, and vocalised after the analogy of other words of similar formation, the name should in all probability be pronounced Yahăveh or Yahveh. The objection to the use of the form Yahveh or Jahveh is, that the *h* in the middle is apt to become quiescent, and the word to be pronounced Ya-veh, which is a mistake. I may add that whatever objections there may be against deviating from a pronunciation which is invested with sacred associations, there are certain advantages, which will appear as we proceed, in keeping, in a discussion like the present, as near as possible to the original. In quotations from modern writers the spelling of the respective authors is retained. The origin and the significance of the name are considered in the sequel (chap. xi.)

Milcom to Ammon; and they possessed certain traditions, variously accounted for, of their origin and of the manner in which He had become their national God: but their religious faith and religious observances were very much of the same kind as those of the nations around them. Particularly from the Canaanites, among whom they settled, and whom they gradually assimilated or absorbed, they adopted many religious customs and beliefs,—appropriating their sacred places, making pilgrimages to their sacred tombs, and ascribing to their own ancestors the honours which were paid by the Canaanites to local heroes departed. Custom grew into law, legend was made into history, and at the time when we have the first authentic records of them, they are practising the rites of a worship which had grown up in the way indicated, with conceptions of their national God similar to the beliefs of the neighbouring nations regarding their gods. The Biblical books which relate the history up to the eighth century B.C. did not exist in anything like their present form till long after the events; and it is only from early pieces contained in them, or by various inferences, that we can get a true account of the history of that time,—the books in their present form being manipulated by later hands, and exhibiting a projection of later ideas into past times. But by the eighth century we have compositions belonging to that century itself, and from that time onwards literary works come to our aid for the understanding of the history. It was to the prophets that the purification of the religious conceptions of Israel was due. They first perceived and taught the people a higher truth, and by them the ethic monotheism of the Old Testament was developed. Before their time "the nation had been the ideal of religion

in actual realisation; the prophets confronted the nation with an ideal to which it did not correspond. Then to bridge over this interval the abstract ideal was framed into a law, and to this law the nation was to be conformed."[1] In this way the code of Deuteronomy was prepared some short time before the eighteenth year of the reign of Josiah, when it is said to have been discovered in the Temple. This code of law does not therefore belong to the age of Moses, though it is represented as coming from him, to give it higher sanction. It was, in fact, the attempt to frame a norm for the guidance of Israel in the truth which the prophets had taught. But it had an effect other than its framers had anticipated; it substituted for the free living voice of God speaking through His prophets, the voice of a dead law; and so, without meaning it, the prophets became "the spiritual destroyers of the old Israel."[2] Law, therefore, was the outcome of prophecy, not its antecedent; and it found its ultimate development in the Levitical code of Ezra, which was the starting-point of modern Judaism.

Without entering now into any discussion of the points here raised, we may observe that this theory professes to expound the history of Israel according to the principle of a continuous natural development, showing the gradual expansion of the religious idea from the narrowest conceptions of nationalism, or even animism, to that of a pure monotheism, and the rise of religious institutions from mere natural custom, often the most superstitious, to codified law with divine sanctions. Stade, a distinguished advocate of the modern view, says[3] we must at the outset regard the religion of old Israel as

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 491. [2] Ibid.
[3] Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol. i. pp. 8, 9.

in the process of becoming, and not entering the world in a completed form like Christianity or Mohammedanism. Christianity, he says, appears as a completed religion, just because it is the conclusion of the religion of Israel; but we must not apply to the religion of Israel the maxim of Schleiermacher, derived from a consideration of Christianity, that a religion is seen in its greatest purity at its source.[1] On which it may be remarked, that whatever mistakes may have been made on this subject in the "traditional view," the Biblical records themselves indicate very clearly a development of its kind. The great difference in the two theories consists in the germ from which the development took place, and the stage of evolution that had been reached in the earlier times whose history we seek to determine.

We have, therefore, two opposing views of the history —the Biblical view, set forth by the Hebrew historians, and the view formulated by the modern historians of Israel. The latter does not hesitate to call the former unhistorical, and might itself therefore be called the anti-Biblical, though I shall simply call it the "modern theory." I have called them two contending *theories*, for so they are. The Old Testament historical books are not bare chronicles of events. They are animated by a principle, in accordance with which the writers profess to explain the events. If we suppose the accounts of early times to have been written early, or if we take the very earliest of the written sources which the critics will admit, even then they are more than bare recitals of facts. There is ever a certain interpretation of the facts, a certain view taken by the narrator which colours his facts or guides the disposal of them in his recital—a certain insight, true

[1] See Note V.

or false, which he thinks he has into the secrets and *causes* of things. If, again, we suppose that these accounts of early times are written late, the accounts again imply reflection, interpretation, theory. In any case, there is more than the mere representation of facts. "History, as distinguished from chronicles or annals, must always contain a theory, whether confessed by the writer or not It may not be put prominently forward, but it lurks in the pages and may be read between the lines. A sound theory is simply a general conception, which co-ordinates and gives unity and a causal relation to a multitude of facts. Without this, facts cease to have interest except to the antiquarian."[1]

The state of the case is this: The history of Israel ran through a course of development of some kind. The Hebrew writers had some knowledge of the events and crises of the history, from personal experience, from oral tradition, from conviction engrained in the national consciousness, or from written sources; and they set themselves, at the time or at some time, to give an ordered account of the events. But in any case, it is *their* view of the history that lies before us. Modern writers also have knowledge of certain events. From the writings in our hands, and from other sources, they have information of the crises and outstanding facts. They have also before them in these books the views that the Biblical writers entertained, and on the strength of all these they write their histories of Israel. But, again, it is *their* interpretation of the events and phenomena that lies before us. The date of the written history in either case does not *in itself* affect the validity of the theory. Writers of this nineteenth Christian century

[1] Simon S. Laurie, Rise and Constitution of Universities, Pref. p. vi.

claim that they have the true account to give of the matter, although they have practically no additional *facts* to go upon. We cannot therefore allow them, on the mere ground of *lateness*, to reject a theory which, let us say, was framed a few centuries before Christ. It may be that the early theory had the more accurate insight and gave the more correct interpretation of the facts of the history. The question simply is, Which of the two theories gives on the whole the better explanation of all the circumstances which are known and admitted? There is a sort of higher criticism in either case, but the theory that is to hold the field must not only raise difficulties but must lay them, and must, on the view of all the facts of the case, commend itself, on literary and critical and common-sense grounds, as the better explanation. There is something worth thinking of in the words of Thoreau: "How comes it that history never has to wait for facts, but for a man to write it? The ages may go on forgetting the facts never so long: he can remember two for every one forgotten. The musty records of history, like the catacombs, contain the perishable remains, but only in the breast of genius are embalmed the souls of heroes. There is very little of what is called criticism here. It is love and reverence, rather, which deal with qualities not relatively but absolutely great; for whatever is admirable in a man is something infinite, to which he cannot set bounds. These sentiments allow the mortal to die, the immortal and divine to survive."[1] Now the Hebrew writers were very far from being dry annalists, and it is quite possible that they, like the evangelists after them, possessed those sentiments of love and reverence which qualified them for being true historians.

[1] Review of Thomas Carlyle.

Some of the outstanding facts which have to be accounted for have already been mentioned, such as the persistence of the race and religion, the early consolidation of the people around their religious faith, and the power of this faith to produce two of the greatest religions of the world. Other features will meet us as we proceed, such as the high spiritual tone of the religion, as early as we can obtain contemporaneous accounts, and the influence of the prophets, which, on either theory, is immense. For all these things there must be found, if possible, an adequate cause and sufficient historical explanation. And even if the accounts contained in the Biblical books are pronounced unhistorical, we have before us a very difficult problem—viz., to explain how, at what time, and from what causes arose the conviction which these writers so firmly hold, that this was the true course of events. The Biblical historians say, "We write thus, because thus things occurred." If the anti-Biblical historians say, "Things did not so occur," they are bound, among other things, to give a reasonable explanation why the Biblical historians so wrote.

In a general way we may contrast the two theories thus: The modern theory undertakes to trace the development of the religion from the lowest stages of animistic worship up to ethic monotheism, and from custom up to authorised divine law, and this too within the period distinctively embraced in the history of Israel as a people. The Biblical theory also posits a development; but the essential things which were finally reached—a belief in a moral deity, the one ruler of the world, and a law divinely given—are there in germ and substance to start with at the threshold of the nation's life. There are low stages of belief, there are customs rising into laws, on

both theories. The difference lies in the place assigned to them.

These are the two theories of the history, and we have before us a mass of literature which gives the sole or the main information which we possess regarding it, and from which, therefore, is to be obtained in some manner the only standard by which the two theories can be tested. The one theory has, let us say, overlaid itself upon the books, or worked itself into them; the other has, by critical processes, worked itself out of them. How shall we hold the balance between them? Clearly we must approach the subject by its literary side: we must neither, on the one hand, invest the books as a whole with authority and claim for them inspiration, for that would be to foreclose the whole inquiry, as it would be opposed to the principle of Protestantism;[1] nor must we, on the other hand, summarily reject books or portions of them on merely subjective grounds, saying that such and such parts represent later and unhistorical views, or arbitrarily set aside as unhistorical everything in which there is a miraculous element. The books are our only witnesses—the only materials we have for forming our conclusions. This has been well put by Kuenen himself: "The Bible is in every one's hand. The critic has no other Bible than the public. He does not profess to have any additional documents, inaccessible to the laity, nor does he profess to find anything in his Bible that the ordinary reader cannot see. It is true that here and there he improves the common translation; but this is the exception, not the rule. And yet he dares to form a conception of Israel's religious development totally different from that which, as any one may see, is set forth in the

[1] See Briggs, Biblical Study, p. 106 ff.; Whither? p. 73 ff

Old Testament, and to sketch the primitive Christianity in lines which even the acutest reader cannot recognise in the New."[1] Since, however, the critics undertake so much, we must stipulate that their criticism shall be fair. They must not criticise the books away altogether. The books are the materials out of which the structure of the history is to be built, not a mere scaffolding, within which out of other materials—say of a purely subjective character—the building is to rise. When all is done, the books should appear more valuable as parts of a compact whole; and even the late parts, when proved to be late, ought to fall into their proper place, and add symmetry to the structure.

Here then, manifestly, a difficulty in procedure presents itself. The Biblical theory is formulated in the books as they lie before us. The modern historians do not deny this, but maintain that the parts of the books in which the theory finds expression are not trustworthy documents, but are of late origin, and give expression to late views. Both theories profess to be supported by the same books, but they imply different views of the books.

In order to have a clear point of departure and a fair start in the inquiry, it is essential that there should be some position on which both parties in the controversy are agreed, if only for a moment, before diverging so widely as they ultimately do—some determinative fact or facts which shall not be disputed, the evidence of which shall neither be assumed in advance nor called in question at a later stage. If certain witnesses are suspected, we must either sift their testimony, or fall back upon witnesses whose word is beyond question.

Now the main point in dispute is as to the history of

[1] Modern Review, July 1880. Comp. National Religions, &c., p. 69 f.

religious belief and practice in the earlier period, particularly the period from Moses to the time when, as is admitted on both sides, we have the contemporary writings of prophets. But this is the very period as to which the modern theory says the books give no reliable history. The narratives contained in the Pentateuch, which ostensibly exhibit the earlier phases of the religion, are, they say, not history at all, but merely an account of what later writers fancied the early history must have or should have been, and represent only *their* views, and reflect their times. It might seem, therefore, a natural course at this point to set ourselves to a critical examination of these productions in particular, so as to eliminate from them the credible element, in the shape of a substratum of fact, and thus obtain reliable materials for that period of the history. This, in fact, has been the method usually followed by those who have undertaken recent histories of Israel—to criticise or verify the sources. It is a tedious, and in some respects a dreary process, as may be seen by turning over the pages of such a work as Kuenen's 'Hexateuch.' How far the critics have been successful in their work I shall not now stop to inquire, because, in order to reach the end before us, I believe that there is another and surer way, which will enable us to dispense with so laborious an investigation. There are three practical reasons which I think sufficient to justify the course which I propose to pursue. They are these:—

1. The merely critical process of examination of the documents in question is not decisive for the purpose of giving us an undisputed starting-point. Even if it be granted that critics have succeeded in separating the component parts of the Hexateuch, there remains the deter-

mination of their order and respective dates, and the degree in which they are dependent one upon another. When it comes to the settlement of these points, recourse is had to a hypothesis of the manner in which the development of the history took place; and different critics, even when they agree in the main as to the separation of the sources, give very different accounts of the time and manner in which they came together. Kuenen himself admits the point for which I am contending. In giving a history of the criticism, he says that up to the time of Bleek, when critics sought on purely literary grounds to determine the order of composition of the sources, there was no certain result attained; and that it was only when the aid of "historical criticism" was called in that an arrangement of these was possible.[1] The most striking proof of the matter is, that one element of the Hexateuch, the so-called fundamental writing or priestly document, which was on all hands set down as the earliest of the sources, is now by the Grafian hypothesis made the very latest; and the only reason for this change of view is the introduction of the hypothesis as to the course of the history. There is thus always a certain amount of reasoning in a circle, the theory of the history being introduced to determine the dates and orders of the documents, which otherwise could not be determined; while the books themselves, rearranged according to this hypothesis, are appealed to as proofs of the new theory of the history. Of course it is maintained that the theory of the history can be and is proved on other grounds; that the succession of the elements in detail is fixed by "reference to an independent standard—namely, the inner development of the history of Israel, so

[1] Kuenen, The Five Books of Moses, a Lecture delivered at Haarlem, 1870, translated by John Muir, 1877, p. 7 f.

far as that is known to us by trustworthy testimonies from independent sources."[1] So be it; we shall see by-and-by on what independent grounds it rests. My point at present is, that we cannot at the outset debate it on the ground of the Pentateuch, where confessedly it cannot be settled.

2. The Biblical theory does not depend upon the authorship and mode of composition of the Hexateuch. It is indeed often assumed on both sides that it does; and the critics usually combat "the traditional theory,"[2] as it is called, on this subject. It is important, therefore, that we should see exactly how this matter stands, so that the Biblical theory may have fair play, and may not be weighted with what is not a part of it.

It is certainly the case that the tradition of the Jewish Synagogue, followed without scrutiny by the Christian Church, was to the effect that the Pentateuch was substantially written by Moses. By the time that the books of the Old Testament were collected into a Canon—how much earlier we cannot tell—the five books forming the Pentateuch had come to be spoken of as the Law of Moses, or the Book of the Law of Moses. This was natural enough, since they contained as a main element the Law which the nation accepted as of Mosaic origin. These books have indeed as much right to be called the books of Moses, as the books of Joshua, Judges, or Samuel to be named as they are. Whatever may have been the view of those who first collected the Canon as to the share Moses had in the composition of these books, in point of fact we find the Jewish tradition on this subject, as early as we can trace it, assigning to him the authorship. The time of modern literary criticism was not yet, and probably those

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 12. [2] See Note IV.

who gave utterance to the dictum did not think what it involved. In proof of the loose way in which the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch was held, we may refer to the tradition, equally persistent and not considered inconsistent with the other, that Ezra "restored the Law;"[1] or even to the belief current at an early time that he rewrote the whole Old Testament.[2] The account which the Talmudists give of the composition and authorship of all the books, shows how little they actually knew about the matter. The truth is, that the tradition was of a general kind, and the matter is one in which we cannot rely on tradition for the preservation of exact details. And so the Christian Church, in accepting the canonical books of the Old Testament, accepted also without question and without reflection the current traditions as to their authorship. In point of fact, however, the books of the Pentateuch, like the historical books which follow them, are anonymous. The book of Genesis gives no hint of its authorship, neither does the book of Leviticus; and the few passages found in the other books which speak of Moses writing such and such things "in a book," will be discovered on examination to refer to certain specific things. Indeed the very fact of such expressions occurring within the books may even be taken as a presumption that it was not he who wrote the whole.

The "traditional" adherence to the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch has caused no little confusion. For when it was seen that there were certain things that could not possibly have been written by him, and when the composite character of the books was pointed out, it was thought that the credibility of the books was destroyed; alarm was felt

[1] See Note VI.

[2] See Robertson Smith, Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 155.

on one side lest the authority of Scripture should be undermined, and on the other side it was triumphantly asserted that the books were of no historical value because they were not contemporary compositions. Both positions are untenable. (1.) The historical value of these books does not depend on their being written by Moses, or indeed on our knowing who the author was. Suppose the books had borne on their face that Moses was their author, the books themselves give us almost all the information we possess as to Moses; and from them, therefore, alone, we can judge whether he was likely to give us a true history. We should be again reasoning in a circle; proving the truth of the books on the authority of Moses, and proving the existence and activity of Moses on the authority of the books. And if the credibility of the books is to be made dependent on our knowing the author, on what grounds are we to believe the succeeding books whose authors are entirely unknown? (2.) On the other hand, the critics would not have been likely to accept the statements of books such as these are, even had it been proved that they were written by Moses or some contemporary of his. They would have reserved to themselves the right of rejecting or accepting on internal grounds the history recorded. For example, Kuenen, speaking of Islam, laments the deficiency of information just at the points where it would be most valuable, and says "the tradition is coloured throughout by the dogmatic convictions of the first believers, and is often open to the gravest suspicion."[1] Just so; even if it were demonstrated to a certainty that Moses wrote the Pentateuch, that would not make the critical school a whit more ready to accept its statements. The course of New Testament criticism furnishes an illus-

[1] National Religions, p. 10 f.

tration of what is possible in a case like this. Though the Gospels are proved to be of so early a date that the writers could have had knowledge of the things they profess to relate, the modern advanced critics of the New Testament do not feel themselves bound on that account to receive the books as historical. They have to make allowance for the bias of the writer even when the writer is a contemporary; and if he relates events which they consider cannot have occurred, his account is rejected as incredible. Critics of the Old Testament are in the habit —as we shall see—of treating documents and writers in the same way, altogether irrespective of whether these are contemporaneous or not; and therefore little value should be placed on a contention coming from their side, that if the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch is disproved, its historical value is affected. In other words, critics would not accept the Pentateuch as historical, even if it were proved that Moses was the author.

It seems to be too readily assumed and too readily admitted, that contemporaneousness and credibility of documents are necessarily inseparable, or to be inferred as a matter of course one from the other. A moment's reflection will show that an event may have historically occurred, and that we may have good evidence of it, even although no account of it was written down at the moment of its occurrence; as also that false statements in regard to certain matters of fact may be made, and put on record at the time of the actual occurrences. The mere writing down of these at the time does not make them credible, nor does the omission to write those make them incredible. Assyrian and Egyptian kings may lie upon stone monuments — very probably they did — in regard to events of their own day; and Hebrew his-

torians may tell us a true story of their history though they wrote it long after the events.[1]

The point to be established is, that for the Biblical theory of the history it does not matter who wrote the historical books. The theory does indeed imply that those books contain true history; but its acceptance of the facts does not depend on a knowledge of who wrote them down; for on this point the books themselves are for the most part silent. Moses may have written much, or may have written little, of what is contained in the Pentateuch; it will remain unknown who were the authors of the succeeding books: our knowledge of these things would not necessarily guarantee the history. The Biblical theory, as an account of the manner in which things took place, does not stand or fall by the determination of the contemporaneousness of documents, and the modern theory certainly has no higher claim to the possession of contemporary sources for its support.

3. And thirdly, the modern theory, like the Biblical, is now formulated in such a shape that it can be taken as a whole, and tested on grounds that lie apart from questions of the authorship of the books of the Hexateuch. There are certain admitted facts; at a certain point we come upon ground that is undisputed; some outstanding facts and phenomena of the history are before us; and each theory in turn gives its account of the origin and significance of these facts and phenomena. At a certain time we emerge upon the ground of admitted history, when contemporaneous writings come to our aid, for the determination of conditions and circumstances which have a clear significance for the history; and it becomes possible by an examination of the two theories to determine

[1] See Note VII.

which of them answers the more accurately to those conditions and circumstances, and so fits in the more accurately to the course of the history at a point which is undisputed.

What is here proposed, therefore, is to leave entirely out of account in the first place those books or parts of books which are declared to be unhistorical, and to come to a time at which both theories agree that we are on clear historical ground. The critical historians shall be allowed, provisionally, to indicate what that period is; they shall also be allowed to indicate the writings which belong to that period; and without passing judgment upon the selection, but merely viewing the whole theory as a hypothesis, we shall leave challenged witnesses entirely in the background, and question those who are brought forward as trustworthy. We shall try to discover what testimony they afford in regard to certain distinctive points of the two theories, and to find in which direction the truth lies. There are certain great turning-points, and outstanding phenomena which are explained differently by the two theories. So far as these fall within a sphere where we have trustworthy evidence, we shall examine the witnesses as to their significance, and in every case shall seek to proceed from the known and admitted to the less known or unknown or disputed. We shall not claim authority or inspiration for any of the writings, but shall insist that they be taken in *bonâ fide*, and interpreted by a fair and common-sense criticism. If the claim to authority is not pressed on the one side, the claim of subjective or theoretical criticism is to be disallowed on the other. We must have *some bona fide* witnesses to start with, or no progress is possible. If the only witnesses available turn out to be unworthy of cre-

dence, it is difficult to see how any conclusion at all can be arrived at which may be regarded as safe.

By thus testing the two theories according to a standard which is accepted, and on ground which is undisputed, we shall obtain some means of estimating the value of those other witnesses also, who at the outset are held in the background. For if the Biblical theory can sustain itself on independent ground, it is evident that those challenged witnesses who are in its favour will have to be regarded as credible testimony; in other words, if apart from the historical books which are disputed the Biblical theory is established, then those books or portions of them which proceed on the Biblical theory fall into their proper place as history. If by purely historical inquiry we can determine the main line and trend of the history, then it will be safe to criticise the documents by literary methods, so as to determine earlier and later elements, separating duplicates, and so forth, but always with regard to the historical line that has been ascertained. This is more scientific than positing a hypothetical line of development, and then trying to make the materials square with it, or arranging them to suit it. If it is only on the basis of a historical criticism that the arrangement of the materials can be made, the historical scheme should, if possible, be determined on independent grounds, and not put forth at the outset as hypothetical.

CHAPTER III.

WRITINGS OF THE NINTH AND EIGHTH CENTURIES B.C. AS LITERARY AND AS RELIGIOUS PRODUCTS.

The limitations imposed on our inquiry compel us to find a neutral and undisputed starting-point—We accept the century 850 to 750 B.C., within which fall the earliest writing prophets, as well as certain other compositions which are assigned to this period—Value of contemporary documents—Enumeration of the writings admitted, and statement of the problem—First of all, the existence of a varied literature in this one century has to be explained—Writing implies reading and education of some kind and duration—Secondly, as religious products the writings call for explanation—The utterances of the earliest writing prophets, and their being addressed to the people, inconsistent with the idea that it is a time of rudimentary religious ideas—Conclusion that this period is neither the earliest literary age nor the time of commencement of the prophetic religion.

It follows, from the limitation we have set to our inquiry in the preceding chapter, that we cannot now proceed, as would otherwise be convenient, to trace the history of the religion of Israel downwards in a connected way from the earliest times. We must take our stand, at the commencement of our inquiry, upon common and undisputed ground. In order to have such a starting-point, we fix upon the period when the modern historians say we have authentic written information — viz., the period within

which fall the earliest writing prophets, Amos and Hosea. With them we have contemporary accounts, so far as they go, of the religious beliefs of Israel; and from their writings as well as other compositions, which we are allowed to use as belonging to about the same age, we shall obtain, in the first place, those views, at least, which writers of that time held. And then, from the known and admitted, we must seek to determine, as best we can, the unknown or disputed. The discussion will thus be very much simplified; for it will not be legitimate for either party to take shelter behind any preconceived theory, either of the inspiration, authority, and sequence of books, or of a certain course of historical development. If there is a disadvantage in being deprived of contemporary written authority for an early period which we wish to determine, the disadvantage will lie equally against both sides. We shall be compelled to fix our attention on certain facts which are admitted, and by a process of inference, which must be closely watched, to make our way back to antecedent facts and situations.

The value of contemporary writings in a discussion of this kind is immense. From them we obtain a firm ground from which to start, for we derive information as to the conditions of thought and life at the time of the writers in hand. We are enabled to perceive not only the ideas of the writers themselves, but the conceptions and practices that were current in their time, so far as the writers have occasion to touch upon them. The writings of the prophets are in this respect particularly valuable; for these teachers were pre-eminently men of their time, addressing themselves directly to the situations in which they were placed, and appealing to the consciousness of the people by whom they were surrounded.

It would be a mistake, however, to limit the value of contemporary writings to the mere information they give in regard to contemporary conditions. A writer is indeed the child of his age, but his age is the product of antecedent influences; and unless we can from contemporary writings find our way by safe inference to the causes that exerted them, we shall never make any progress. Histories of Israel written in this nineteenth Christian century reflect the spirit of the age; but their authors would not like to have them set aside as merely the afterthoughts of modern speculation projected backward into a distant time. And the writings of prophetical men, in the same way, are more than the expression of their own reflections. We must account for the turn which their reflections took, for the standpoint which they had reached; the men and their writings are historical facts which are to be historically explained. And as they were not ostensibly historians, any information they give us as to the history will be the more free from suspicion of tendency or bias.

The great point in this discussion is to determine as clearly as possible the religion of Israel in the period preceding the earliest writing prophets. This period is frequently spoken of in modern works as the "pre-prophetic period"; but this mode of speaking requires qualification. To say the "pre-prophetic" religion of Israel, is liable to involve the assumption that the writing prophets differed in their teaching from those that preceded them, which is just the point in dispute. We are not entitled at the outset to assume that the prophetic period, as a stadium in the religious history of Israel, begins with the prophets whose writings have come down to us; and therefore the expression, although convenient in some

respects, should not be employed without this necessary qualification.

Let us now endeavour to gain some idea of the period at which we have agreed to take our stand, and which may be roughly stated as the century 850 to 750 B.C. Though it is maintained that this is the earliest historical standing-ground in Israel's history, it is, according to the Biblical account, comparatively late; and in point of fact, it is not disputed on the other side that a great many important historical events had already happened. By the eighth century before Christ, the northern kingdom of the ten tribes had reached the culmination of its greatness, from which it rapidly declined to its fall. Amos prophesied in the time of Jeroboam II., in the first half of the eighth century—*i.e.*, before 750 B.C.; and Hosea probably lived till near the ruin of the kingdom. Though the books of the Kings were not written till long after, and therefore cannot, with the limitations we have imposed upon our inquiry, be relied upon for the *interpretation* they put upon the events, yet the succession of rulers in the two kingdoms as the books give them, as well as the separation of the two kingdoms in the reign of Rehoboam, and in general the simple facts of the history as there recorded, are accepted. Moreover, there are certain compositions which are admitted as existing in or belonging to the same age. The stories of the patriarchs as given in the Jehovistic portions of the book of Genesis;[1] the accounts of the doings and sayings of Elijah and Elisha which have become embodied in the books of Kings, are admitted to have been committed to writing in this period; and though they are not to be accepted as history—the stories of the patriarchs in par-

[1] See Note VIII.

ticular—yet they may be taken as embodying the ideas of the men who committed them to writing, and they are thus at least materials for judging of the views which at this time were entertained. Furthermore, it is not denied that in the book of Judges—later editorial interpretations excepted—we have a pretty accurate description of the time to which it refers; and that the books of Samuel—later glosses again excepted—relate certain facts as to the activity of Samuel, and the setting up of the kingdom. Lastly, although the book of Deuteronomy was not yet in existence, nor the Code of Laws and accompanying narrative of the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, yet there existed a brief written Code, the so-called Book of the Covenant contained in Exodus xx.-xxiii. It is, however, necessary to add, that though these writings are admitted to belong to the periods respectively stated, their historical value, it is maintained, can only be determined by the most careful criticism; and historical critics are very much divided among themselves as to the positive residuum of truth underlying them.

These then, roughly speaking, are the authorities at our disposal for the inquiry. Later writings, of course, which are undisputed, such as the prophecies of Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and bare facts of history which are not denied, may be referred to if there is occasion. But we are not to appeal to those so-called later "summaries" or reviews[1] of the history, and what are regarded as interpretations of it in the light of later ideas, which the Biblical historians have, in certain places, superimposed upon earlier authentic documents. The ultimate point we wish to determine, by the aid of these authorities, is this, What actually was

[1] See below, p. 116.

the religion of Israel, in its various aspects of belief and practice, in the times *preceding* the authorities to which we appeal, and how far back can be traced the beliefs which we find prevailing in undisputed historic times? And the only way, it seems to me, by which we can reach a settlement of this question is to determine, in the first place, what the undisputed authorities say for themselves, as to their own time, and then by inference to work our way back to an earlier time and condition of things.

Having restricted ourselves to the very narrowest grounds, we need not expect to find full information on all the points which we desire to determine. We may have to be content with brief hints, and may have to draw our inferences from a few texts. In any case, we shall have to be satisfied with general conclusions. But, by shifting our point of view, and starting various lines of inquiry, we should be able to discover whether there is a concurrent testimony to the one theory or the other, and to determine in which direction generally the truth lies. And since every positive fact that is available has its significance in such an investigation. I begin with the most patent fact of all—the *existence* of these writings, which are placed in our hands as materials for the solution of the problem. Without asking in the meantime what the contents of the writings are, here is a hard fact —that writings do exist at the period from which we start. Let us see whether we can draw any conclusions from this mere fact; and for this purpose let us look at them, *first*, as mere literary products, and *secondly*, as religious compositions.

I. I propose, therefore, first of all, to look at the compositions now before us in their literary character. As so many compositions belonging, according to the hypothesis,

all to one age, they are well worthy of close scrutiny. Their very existence ought to tell us something, and, if possible, we ought to get some account of their production. Amos informs us he was one of the herdmen of Tekoa. This was a town or village some twelve miles south of Jerusalem, and bordering on the desert pasture-land, so that he is a native of the southern kingdom. He was not a "prophet nor the son of a prophet"—*i.e.*, he did not belong to what we may call now the professional class of prophets, but was in fact a common man, not necessarily poor, but presumably not in high social position. He suddenly appears at Bethel, one of the seats of the state worship of the northern kingdom; and having delivered a denunciation against the sins of the kingdom, he is taken to task by the priest of Bethel, and in all probability left the country, retired to his own land, and wrote down his prophecies. Hosea seems, from every available indication bearing on the subject, to have been a native of the northern kingdom, and he concerns himself with its affairs almost exclusively. The other literary works ascribed to this age probably belong likewise to both kingdoms. And by the way, when we have so many anonymous writers in the Old Testament, and when these are described to us in modern works by such symbols as J, E, Q, A, B, C, R, and so forth, which convey to us little idea of their personality, it is positively refreshing to get face to face with two writers in flesh and blood, who evidently can contain more than one idea each. Having got two such men, I shall keep as much as I can to their testimony (though I think it is most likely that other writers, whose names we know not, were as human, and capable of taking as broad and comprehensive a view of their times). Their styles and themes are so character-

istic, that I have unconsciously formed a picture of the two men in my own mind. Amos is a lithe, keen, *snell* man, with flashing restless eyes and dark locks, quick in his movements, master of his emotions, though his nostrils throb and his temples swell when he gets excited. He has the sharp high-set voice and wiry body of the modern Bedawy, and when you look at him, you expect him to say something lively and pointed—and he does it. He brings the air of the country about him. In the wilds of Tekoa he has seen encounters with the wild beasts, and has gazed at the stars in the unclouded blue of the midnight sky. So he is bold and cool and collected at the luxurious court, and comes like a gust of sharp bracing wind through its stifling, sensuous atmosphere. Hosea is a bigger man, slower and more dignified in his movements. He is an inhabitant of a town, and lived surely near a public bakery, for he delights to draw illustrations from the fiery oven. His voice is softer and deeper; when you look on him, a seriousness comes over you, for sorrow is marked on his face. If the modern interpretation of the opening chapters is right, he has been sorely tried with a bad wife, whom he tenderly loved; and through the laceration of the chords of his own heart, he has come to understand the unfailing love of God.

Clearly, then, we are in a time when literary composition was well developed all over the country. We have not only the graphic pictures of patriarchal life, so artless in their simplicity, and yet so artistic, that they are the delight of persons of all ages in all countries. We have the stories of the rough, rugged deeds of the Judges, marked with fine delineations of character and touches of pathos and humour; we have the story of Elijah in a form that

nothing could improve; the life of Samuel, the character of Saul, Jonathan, and David, depicted in a manner that a modern novelist could not surpass. Of an entirely different literary cast is the Book of the Covenant, with its brief, sententious expression of codified law. And in still another style we have these two books from the hands of Amos and Hosea, each preserving its own literary features, and indicating a very different personality in the writer, but both well finished as literary productions,— the herdman of Tekoa delivering his rebukes like blows of a flail, and swelling out like peals of thunder in his rounded cycle of denunciation of the nations; the prophet of Israel, tender in heart as a woman, less careful of the form of his sentences, which are broken by the sobs of a breaking heart, but using his language to express some of the finest shades of thought and feeling. Though the productions are not many, they are thus sufficiently varied, and give plain proof that the power of composition on varied themes was an achieved fact in this age. *First* of all, the language by this time has received a well-developed, finished form; and *secondly*, it is not only spoken, but has become a literary medium for any class of composition.

Now language is a coin current of thought. It has a certain value and significance, not only to the speaker or writer, but to the hearer or reader.[1] By the aid of language, when once it has reached its growth, one may convey new thoughts to others; but in doing so he must make himself intelligible to them, and start on a basis which is common to him and them. Language spoken or written implies a certain stage of intelligence in the people generally; and written language implies that there

[1] See Robertson Smith, O.T. in the Jewish Church, Lect. i. p. 22.

are people, more or less numerous, who can read. A popular literature—*i.e.*, literary products suited and interesting to the common people—implies readers among the common people. If these are fair inferences from the mere existence of a finished language and an achieved literature, their application to the matter in hand will enlarge our ideas of the period of history at which we take our start, and may enable us to go back to a period antecedent to it. From the language of such men as Amos and Hosea we may reach the mental condition of the generation in which they lived. And seeing that the literature before us is national and popular, if anything at all, we shall be able in some measure to gauge the standing of the nation as a whole,—to feel, so to speak, its intellectual pulse. These stories of the patriarchs, judges, and prophets were not written by some obscure individual and hidden away in his chambers; they are the very stuff that the people would delight in, and the very writing of them implies that there were readers ready for them. Nay, the prophetic writings themselves, granted that they were not read first of all to the people, but written after they were delivered, from the very fact that they are accounts of speeches thrown into the form of addresses, show that they are meant to be read by the people of the times. We conclude, therefore, that there was a circle, narrower or wider—probably pretty wide—fit to understand these writings, and attaching to the words and phrases the meaning which, by simple construction, they convey. In a word, we get beyond mere "writings" to a people capable of reading and understanding them.

Now, since modern historiographers insist upon our starting at this period, we might reasonably expect

them to give us some account of this remarkable fact, that we have suddenly such an amount of varied literature, with practically nothing of the kind—as it is maintained—in the age preceding it. There are certain songs which in their origin are admitted to be earlier, but they may, it is said, have been preserved orally; and in general the modern writers go upon the assumption that this eighth century is the earliest period at which we have written documents. Be it so; it was surely worth their while to give us some idea of how the event came about; why at this age there should be so much of sudden growth, or what in the immediate past had prepared for it. With their fondness for tracing development, here was something very attractive and deeply interesting; and one might have thought that critical writers, who, according to Robertson Smith,[1] are such masters in literary anatomy that their readers "can follow from chapter to chapter the process by which the Pentateuch grew to its present form," would have turned their attention to the history of the rise of literary composition in Israel. Yet on the subject they have very little to say. After asserting[2] that "with reference to any period earlier than the century 850-750 B.C., we can hardly be said to possess any statistics," and that "a contemporary literature is indispensable for the description of standing conditions," Wellhausen goes on:—

"But it was within this period that Hebrew literature first flourished—after the Syrians had been finally repulsed, it would seem. Writing of course had been practised from a much earlier period, but only in formal instruments, mainly upon stone. At an early period also the historical sense of the people developed itself in connection with their religion; but it found its expression in songs,

[1] Pref. to Hist. of Israel, p. ix. [2] Hist. of Israel, p. 464.

which in the first instance were handed down by word of mouth only. Literature began with the collection and writing out of those songs; the 'Book of the Wars of the Lord' and the 'Book of Jashar' were the oldest historical books. The transition was next made to the writing of prose history with the aid of legal documents and family reminiscences; a large portion of this early historiography has been preserved to us in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Contemporaneously also certain collections of laws and decisions of the priests, of which we have an example in Exod. xxi., xxii., were committed to writing. Somewhat later, perhaps, the legends about the patriarchs and primitive times, the origin of which cannot be assigned to a very early date,[1] received literary shape. Specially remarkable is the rise of a written prophecy. The question why it was that Elijah and Elisha committed nothing to writing, while Amos a hundred years later is an author, hardly admits of any other answer than that in the interval a non-literary had developed into a literary age. How rapid the process was may be gathered from a comparison between the singularly broken utterances of the earlier oracle contained in Isa. xv., xvi., with the orations of Isaiah himself."

On the showing of Wellhausen himself, then, the literature is sufficiently varied and sufficiently extensive to demand attention merely as a collection of literary products. And whatever may be the advance from the "earlier oracle" to the "orations of Isaiah," the style of Amos and Hosea is already as good as the Hebrew ever attained. Isaiah stands alone in this respect—and every country has its outstanding writers—but the sentences of the herdman of Tekoa, and the rhythm of his language, and even the sustained rhetorical efforts of chapters in succession, are as finished as those of the best Hebrew writers. "To the unprejudiced judgment," says Robertson Smith,[2] "the prophecy of Amos appears one of the best examples of pure Hebrew style. The language, the images, the

[1] A footnote here is referred to below in chapter v. p. 122.

[2] Prophets of Israel, p. 125 f.

grouping are alike admirable; and the simplicity of the diction . . . is a token not of rusticity, but of perfect mastery over a language which, though unfit for the expression of abstract ideas, is unsurpassed as a vehicle for impassioned speech." As to the 'Book of the Wars of the Lord' and the 'Book of Jashar,' which Wellhausen sets down as the oldest historical books, we have so little from them that it would not be safe to draw deductions from their style. But if we examine songs such as that of Deborah, which Stade admits to bear the marks of the historical events which it celebrates—even if it were handed down orally to this so-called literary age—we find it distinguished by no inconsiderable literary powers. And then the "early historiography" preserved in the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, has nothing to lead us to suppose that it was the first effort at such composition; while the stories of the patriarchs are in the best style of the characteristic Hebrew prose. The Laws, again, of the Book of the Covenant, are expressed in as clear and finished language as those of the Codes which are placed much farther down in history. It remains then, on the hypothesis before us, that literature sprang into existence fully developed, for the products before us give no signs of being earliest efforts, and, what is most vital, they are not of one class of composition, as might have been expected at the commencement of a literary age, but are most varied.[1] From all that appears on the face of them, we might most naturally infer that literary composition, in every variety of form, had been long prevalent among the Hebrews by the time these works were written. And

[1] The "elegy" as a particular kind of composition was known to Amos; for the word rendered "lamentation" in chap. v. 1 has this technical sense.

surely it is a very poor account to get from those who profess to be able to follow the history step by step, that in a century "a non-literary had developed into a literary age."

Robertson Smith has some excellent remarks,[1] tending to show, from the case of the Arabs of the desert, that it was nothing extraordinary for men of humble station like Amos, with little or no book-learning, to be masters of the highest oratory:—

> "Among the Hebrews as in the Arabian desert, knowledge and oratory are not affairs of professional education, or dependent for their cultivation on wealth and social status. . . . In Hebrew as in Arabic, the best writing is an unaffected transcript of the best speaking; the literary merit of the book of Genesis or the history of Elijah, like that of the 'Kitâb el Aghâny' or of the Norse Sagas, is that they read as if they were told by word of mouth; and in like manner, the prophecies of Amos, though evidently rearranged for publication, and probably shortened from their original spoken form, are excellent writing, because the prophet writes as he spoke, preserving all the effects of pointed and dramatic delivery, with that breath of lyrical fervour which lends a special charm to the highest Hebrew poetry."

All this is very good, but it does not bring us a step nearer to the solution of the question, How did the literary custom arise? and it takes no note of the fact that by a "literary age" must be in any case meant an age of readers as well as writers. The only thing Wellhausen notes in connection with the transition of a non-literary to a literary age, is the final repulse of the Syrians, whatever that may have had to do with it. What we want to know is, What gave the impulse to this literary activity, and what prepared the people—or a circle of them—for being able to follow it? Judged by mere literary standards,

[1] Prophets, p. 126 f.

these compositions would lead us to the conclusion that the literary art had been long practised; or, to put it otherwise, there is nothing on the face of these materials as literary products to hinder us from accepting writings as belonging to an earlier period, if they can be otherwise authenticated; there is nothing, based on a consideration of the culture of the age, to force us to the position that *this* is the beginning of a literary age.

I take it, then, that no sufficient account has been given of the remarkable phenomenon before us. Even if Wellhausen's admission is taken into account, that writing was practised from an early age, but only in formal instruments, and mostly on stone, there is an immense step from that to this sudden production in one century of so varied a literature; and the other fact is to be explained that there must have been reading circles of larger or smaller size. Even rude writing on stone is an art that implied teaching of it, and the thing written was meant to be read.[1] Writing implies reading; both imply an education, and a sustained education of some kind. A literary age is, from the nature of the case, to a certain extent an educated age; and as a literature, even of the extent allowed by the modern historians, exhibiting such variety as these compositions present, demands some antecedent preparation, much more must we postulate for the age for which the compositions were written, a period of antecedent education. In a word, we are clearly not at the beginning of literary or educational activity in Israel.

[1] Andrew Lang, while contending that Homer wrote his poems, adds, "But he did not write to be read" ('Good Words,' Aug. 1891). Still, Homer was not the only one in his day that could write; and, as Prof. Jebb remarks, long before the date of the earliest extant writing on marbles, the Greeks may have attained to ease in writing on softer materials. (Introd. to Homer, p. 110.)

II. We now go a step farther, and by similar reasoning we can show that as *religious* products the compositions before us imply a considerable degree of religious intelligence and education. A man does not speak or write unless he knows that his hearer or reader can follow him. And religious talk or composition presupposes religious intelligence corresponding to it. Granted that a new writer makes an advance in thought and puts forward new ideas, if he is to be understood at all he must start from the level of his reader's intelligence; and it is useless for him to publish unless he counts upon a circle of readers who can understand him.

Accustomed as we are to the spiritual language of Holy Scripture, we can only with difficulty comprehend the time and training implied in the development of a religious vocabulary. Language at best lags far behind thought; and when we consider that thought itself has to be drawn out, purified, refined by reflection, exalted by the elimination of lower material conceptions, we shall perceive that the attainment of a vocabulary expressing ideas such as the herdman of Tekoa and Hosea of Israel dwell among, implies both in the speaker and in the hearer a preparation of no little time and no little labour. An illustration from the history of modern missions will help to make this clearer. When Protestant missionaries first went to Syria, about the year 1826, after surveying the field before them, they wisely resolved to make use of the printing-press as soon as they should find opportunity. Though many of the people could not read, they were not altogether unlettered; the people with whom it was hoped easiest contact would be made were members of the Greek Orthodox Church, devout enough in their way, and under the regular care of their own religious teachers; and it

was hoped that by the establishment of schools the power and the desire to read would be extended. And so, in addition to the Scriptures, it was designed to prepare certain works of a religious and educational character, to be ready for the demand when it should arise. Two of the earliest works prepared and printed were translations of 'Robinson Crusoe' and the 'Pilgrim's Progress'—the former designed to be an interesting reading-book, the latter to be useful as a religious educator. The fates of the two works were remarkable. While 'Robinson Crusoe' had an immense popularity, the 'Pilgrim's Progress' lay in stock for many years. The former was accepted and read as a religious book, not more because it was printed and circulated by missionaries, than because of the *quasi*-pious reflections — admirably done by the translator into popular language —in which the unfortunate Robinson so freely indulges; but of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' the common people could make nothing. The reason is obvious: they had not the religious experience sufficient to enable them to understand a book which even our children delight in; and it was almost half a century before a race grew up, educated in missionary schools and taught in the Scripture, that could appreciate the book; and now it is as great a favourite with old and young as with ourselves. This was a case, be it observed, where the people had for centuries possessed a definite religion and a printed literature. What must the case have been where, by the hypothesis, the people had the merest rudiments of religious conception, and no literature?

Let us look at the facts of the case before us. We have Amos, not writing a book to be read by later times, but speaking his word in the northern kingdom, and com-

mitting it to writing in the southern; and we have Hosea probably both speaking and writing. It may be that, as Robertson Smith has told us, the language used by Amos is not fitted for conveying abstract ideas. At all events, it is an impassioned, fervent language, whose elements are words purified from all low taint of superstition or animism, and, as we shall see, embodying thoughts of world-wide applicability. "Though the earliest of the canonical prophets, his view of the world is perhaps broader than that of any of them, just as his definitions of religion surpass in incisiveness and clearness those of the majority of his successors."[1] Hosea's style, though less finished from a literary point of view, is deeper in pathos and richer in spirituality. It is his preoccupation with the thought that apparently mars the symmetry of his diction. Both prophets give evidence of deep reflection on religious questions, resulting in views of life and duty, and conceptions of what God is, which may be placed in the first rank among the achievements of Old Testament writers, and afford evidence that thinking of this kind, and views of this character, were comprehensible by the people to whom they spoke. In other words, they imply an antecedent religious education. Indeed, the very oldest written works to which Hebrew writers refer, show by their titles that the earliest literature was based on religion. 'The Book of the Wars of Jehovah' implies in its name that even the rough struggles of Israel were regarded as God-guided; and 'The Book of Jashar,' or the Upright, testifies to the faith in Jehovah's righteousness in Israel (Judges v. 11).[2]

We shall find the advocates of the modern theory tell-

[1] A. B. Davidson in Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 166.

[2] Ibid., p. 46.

ing us that Amos was the first to teach this, and Hosea the first to say the other thing. Whatever they said, and whatever they were the first to say, the people of their day knew the meaning of the words and expressions addressed to them. If these prophets were the first to speak in this manner, then, of course, their hearers were the first to hear these things; and yet the people seem to understand quite well all that is said to them. There is a religious phraseology in existence, a religious consciousness equal to comprehend it. These books are religious from beginning to end. The persons who heard or read them must have had such an antecedent training or knowledge as would enable them to follow them, and we cannot by any possibility admit that the whole religious consciousness of the nation took a sudden start to such a level. Let any one try for a moment to imagine Amos addressing the people of Israel in the name of Jahaveh: "Seek ye me, and ye shall live" (Amos v. 4, 6): "Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live; and Jahaveh, the God of hosts, shall be with you, in such a manner as ye say. Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate" (v. 14, 15): "Let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream" (v. 24): "I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of Jahaveh" (viii. 11);—and ask whether the people who heard the words had not already been accustomed to form some ideas of judgment and righteousness, and evil and good, some conceptions of the holiness of their national God far above the level of persons at the animistic or even the narrow national stage of religion. Of the teaching of Amos as to the nature and character of the God in whose name he

spoke, we shall have to treat at length in the sequel. I wish at present to emphasise this one point, that even this cycle of moral conceptions implies an antecedent education of a special kind and of long continuance. When we turn to Hosea, we find even a richer vocabulary and still deeper conceptions. "Sow to yourselves," he says, "in righteousness, and reap according to mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek Jahaveh, till He come and rain righteousness upon you. Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies" (Hos. x. 12, 13): "Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually" (xii. 6). We shall afterwards see what Hosea's ideas of God were; meantime, I call attention to such expressions as these,—to his constant dwelling on "mercy," "truth," "judgment," "fear of Jahaveh,"[1] and such declarations as these: "In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (xiv. 3); "The ways of Jahaveh are right, and the just shall walk in them: but transgressors shall fall therein" (xiv. 9); "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (xi. 4),—all which imply something very different from the first beginnings of reflection on religious things. This point requires to be insisted upon, because, in discussions on the development of religious thought, the "original" or "primary" significations of expressions are often relied upon as evidence. What is clearly established by the most cursory glance at the books of Amos and Hosea, or indeed any of the books belonging to what is called the first writing age, is, that we are already far beyond a tentative or infantile use of language to express religious conceptions.

[1] See, for example, i. 6; ii. 19, 20, 23; iii. 5; iv. 1; vi. 6.

Thus, then, from these two sides, the merely literary and the religious aspects of the books before us, we conclude that the eighth century rests upon an anterior stage of preparation, which must have been considerable in both respects. There was need to dwell on this aspect of the subject, lest, by taking as our starting-point this comparatively late period, it might have been assumed that we were starting from a low stage of culture in order to trace growth upwards.[1] The whole point of the present argument is, that we are already at a high stage both of literary culture and of religious consciousness.

Our argument hitherto has been of an inferential and indirect kind, to the effect that the condition we have found prevailing at the time of the first admitted literary compositions implies an antecedent period of literary activity and religious education. There is implied in this inference that the teaching of the earliest writing prophets in substance also rests upon antecedent teaching; and as this position is strenuously controverted by those who make these prophets innovators, not reformers or continuators, it is important to look at evidence, of a direct or positive kind, on the question. There is nothing in the writings of the earliest writing prophets to indicate that they came forward as exponents of a new religious idea, or that they regarded themselves

[1] In view of these utterances of the earliest writing prophets, and what they imply, it is simply incomprehensible to me how any one can write of the Decalogue as a recent writer in this country does: "The Decalogue, as we have it, does not reflect the standard of conduct which prevailed in his [Moses'] day, or for a long time after him; it reflects, indeed, a standard of conduct which only became fully present to the Jewish mind many centuries later, under the influence of the prophets."—National Religion, by Allan Menzies, p. 22.

as originators in any proper sense of the word. On the contrary, they represent to the people, and lead us to believe, that they are proclaiming the true and authoritative religion in opposition to the errors and abuses of their times. Nay; they do not leave the matter in this indefinite form: they refer to men before them, prophets like themselves, who had done exactly the same thing. Let us listen to Amos: "I raised up of your sons [he is addressing Israel, the northern kingdom] for prophets, and of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not even thus, O ye children of Israel? saith Jahaveh. But ye gave the Nazirites wine to drink; and commanded the prophets, saying, Prophesy not" (Amos ii. 11, 12). "Surely Jahaveh God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets. . . . Jahaveh hath spoken, who can but prophesy?" (iii. 7, 8). And to the same purpose Hosea: "Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and thy judgments[1] are as the light which goeth forth" (Hos. vi. 5): "I have also spoken unto the prophets, and I have multiplied visions, and by the hand of the prophets have I used similitudes" (xii. 10): "And by a prophet Jahaveh brought Israel up out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved" (xii. 13).

All these references are plain and pertinent enough on the Biblical account of the preceding history, which gives us from Samuel onwards,[2] a succession of prophetic men who are represented as standing forth reproving, rebuking, and asserting the true religion of Jahaveh. But they are meaningless on the modern theory, which represents Elijah as a half-legendary character, and his successor

[1] Or "my judgments," according to some ancient versions.

[2] "All the prophets from Samuel," says St Peter in Acts iii. 24.

Elisha as one who compassed political ends by means of very questionable morality;[1] and as for Samuel, when the earlier and true account of him is eliminated from the later and false, he comes out of the critical crucible an old man endowed with second-sight, who for a silver sixpence could tell people what had become of strayed asses and suchlike matters.[2] Clearly these two prophets are confident that they are continuators of the teaching of men like themselves; and all the proof that Amos gives of the fact is the appeal to the knowledge of his hearers. "Is it not so, O house of Israel?" We have the testimony, in a word, of the generation in which they lived; and when modern critics come forward and tell us that Amos and Hosea were the first to teach as they did —simply because they will not allow us to appeal to any documents as of earlier date—I am quite prepared to put the issue in this form, that Amos and Hosea knew better where they had got their religious education than half-a-dozen modern professors can tell us. Either there was a succession of prophetic men before Amos and Hosea whose teaching was of the same spirit with theirs—in which case the view of the antecedent history given by the Biblical historians is strongly confirmed, and the "prophetic period" has its boundaries much farther back than the modern theory allows; or else there was no such succession—in which case our witnesses are set down as not knowing the source of their own religious instruction in the first place, and in the second place the work of these earliest writing prophets is left as a thing hanging in the air, to use Wellhausen's own simile,[3] like a man trying to hold himself up by his waist-band.

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 293.
[2] Ibid., p. 253.
[3] Ibid., p. 39.

I quote once more the cautious and well-weighed words of Dr Davidson:—

"Several well-known modern writers on prophecy . . . have concluded that such a prophet as Amos stood virtually alone in the nation; that there was a great gulf fixed, on one side of which stood the prophet, and on the other the people in a mass; and that what the prophet did was nothing less than to enunciate and introduce a new religion, which had almost nothing in common with that hitherto professed by the people beyond the name Jehovah employed by both. This theory is not only opposed to all the representations of the prophets themselves and the universal tradition among the writers of Israel, but it entirely fails to account for the prophet. The old view, according to which each prophet was a simple, isolated miracle, out of all connection with the life and thought of his time, really offered an explanation, if the view could be accepted; and if the choice lay between the two theories, we should be driven to accept the old theory as necessary to the satisfaction of our understanding. The fact, however, that the prophet Amos himself arose out of the lowest ranks of the people, is sufficient evidence that there existed no such gulf between the prophets and the universal mass of the nation as the modern writers referred to represent."[1]

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 165 f.

CHAPTER IV.

THE "EARLIER PROPHETS."

Since the admitted writings of the ninth and eighth centuries imply an antecedent literary and religious activity, and since the earliest writing prophets appeal to others before them, an attempt is made to find, if possible, traces of such activity and such men—Indications of writing in early times—The tablets of Tell-el-Amarna—Inference as to the possibility of written composition long before the ninth century—Oral transmission does not exclude writing—Power to write implies instruction and exercise—As to religious education, the so-called "schools of the prophets" are considered—Attempt of critical writers to dissociate Samuel and Amos from these societies — Wellhausen's admission of early religious colouring of the history—Argument therefrom—The accuracy of the oldest writings in matters of topography, and what it implies—Conclusion that the earliest history writers are not at the stage of floating traditionary myth—Literary activity of priestly class.

We have thus seen that as literary products and as religious products the writings of the ninth and eighth centuries imply a long course of education, reflection, and culture. We have also heard the earliest of the writing prophets appealing to an antecedent series of public men, who are said to have anticipated them in the work of instruction and admonition. Of all this antecedent activity the modern historians give practically no account. Let us inquire whether from the Biblical writers we can

gain any information. As the time of which we are speaking is confessedly an age of readers as well as writers, it is interesting to inquire whether we have any proofs of the existence of literary activity at an earlier period. We cannot, of course, from the restriction we have imposed on ourselves, build upon such statements as occur in the Pentateuch to the effect that Moses wrote this and that. But we may ask whether we have any reliable information at all as to the provisions that existed in Israel for perpetuating these arts of reading and writing.

And here we come upon a most remarkable and significant fact,—that the Old Testament books from beginning to end give us no intimations of the nature of such provisions. They imply that writing and reading were generally known, but they tell us nothing about the communication of instruction in these things. We find, indeed, in the Pentateuch,[1] the injunction in general terms to teach the precepts of the Law to the children (Exod. xii. 26, 27; Deut. iv. 9, vi. 6-20), and the people are enjoined in cases of difficulty to inquire at the priest or judge. But, on the one hand, if the books in which these injunctions occur are of late date, we cannot from them infer anything to our purpose; on the other hand, even if the injunctions rest upon a sound early tradition, they are so general that we are still left in ignorance. The matter of education is not apparently committed to

[1] Delitzsch has pointed out that there is no mention of writing in the striking account of Abraham's dealing with the Hittites in Gen. xxiii.; nor does the usual word for writing (*katab*) occur in any part of that book; whereas from Exodus onwards an acquaintance with and varied use of writing are implied. It would thus appear as if the Pentateuch placed the introduction of writing after the patriarchal age and before the time of the Exodus.—Introd. to Comm. on Genesis, Eng. transl., p. 3 ff.

any but the parents, and the question would only be thrown back a stage as to their fitness to teach; and from none of the books of the Old Testament can we gather what appliances, if any, existed for the instruction of youth. Even in regard to the priests, who, on any theory as to the development of the history, must have had to undergo special instruction in the matters of ceremonial intrusted to them, we are not told anything as to the means provided for imparting it. Were the age before us really the first literary age, we should expect some of the writers of the period to give us some hint of the new activity and the impulse that led to it. But we have no such indication. In short, were we to reason from the silence of the books, we might conclude that there was no provision for education at all in even the narrower circles of a learned class, if such existed. But we could not possibly find a better example of the inadequacy of the argument from silence; for, to say nothing else, it would leave the so-called first literary age destitute of any foundation, a sudden phenomenon without any preparation; and if anything in the world implies preparation and development it is literary activity.

But for the consideration just mentioned, we might have concluded that these references to reading and writing are, in critical phraseology, a projection of later ideas into earlier times. There is, however, another conclusion which may be drawn from this silence as to educational activity. The Old Testament writers, when they speak of reading and writing, speak of them as matters of course, as if they were commonly practised, well-understood things. It is, indeed, the custom in some quarters to doubt the possibility of literary activity

on the part of Moses;[1] and, as we have seen, Wellhausen only grudgingly admits that writing was practised before the eighth century. It may turn out, however, that the silence of the Old Testament writers may have the very explanation I have just suggested—viz., that from a very early time reading and writing were quite common. For, to speak first of all of Egypt, not only are there proofs of the practice of writing long before the time of Moses, but the period immediately preceding the exodus was one of remarkable activity and high attainment. The poem of Pentaur,[2] which has been compared with a lay of the Iliad, celebrates a victory gained over the Hittites by Rameses II., the father of the Pharaoh of the exodus. And beyond Egypt, it now appears, literary activity prevailed to an extraordinary degree; "and the bricks are alive at this day to testify it." Quite recently, indeed, a new light has been thrown on this whole subject by the discovery at Tell-el-Amarna, in Upper Egypt, of certain tablets, written in the cuneiform character, and going back to the century before the date assigned by most Egyptologists to the exodus. These prove, according to Sayce,[3] that "good schools existed (at that time) throughout Western Asia; that the people of Canaan could read and write before the Israelitish conquest; that there was

[1] Thus Allan Menzies: "Even if he were to some extent a man of letters (and it is doubtful if he could be so), any written words of his which survive must be extremely short."—National Religion, p. 15 f.

[2] See Note IX.

[3] 'Contemp. Review' for August 1888. In the 'Presbyterian Review' for the same month there is another early notice of the tablets. Fuller accounts have been subsequently published. See, *e.g.*, the 'Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology' from 1888, and the new series of 'Records of the Past.' The papers of M. Halévy in the 'Revue des Etudes Juives' for 1890 are particularly valuable. See also Conder in the 'Scottish Review' for April 1891.

an active literary intercourse from one end of the civilised East to the other." It is true, the medium of communication was the Babylonian language and script; but we cannot suppose that a people acquainted with that mode of writing would relapse into illiterates when the Phœnician alphabet took its place;[1] much more reasonable is it to suppose that this discovery would be an immense stimulus to them. We need no longer, therefore, wonder that among the towns taken by Joshua was one called Kirjath-sepher, *Book-town* (Josh. xv. 15; Judges i. 11), or Kirjath-sannah (Josh. xv. 49); or that a lad caught at the roadside was able to write down the names of the chief men of Succoth in the time of the Judges (Judges viii. 14, Revised Version). Nay, we need not wonder, as otherwise we naturally do, that the Old Testament gives no account of provision for teaching, or any hint of schools for instruction of youth. In all probability—in view of this discovery—education was a much more general thing than we are usually led to suppose.

If the people of Canaan thus at an early period had attained a literary activity of this degree, scholars of Wellhausen's school, who derive so much of Israel's culture from the Canaanites, can hardly refuse to allow a considerable attainment in literary power to the Israelites at a much earlier period than the eighth century. At least they cannot say that, owing to want of culture, Israel could not have developed some literature long before that time. Given the ability to write, the art must have been kept alive by exercise, and handed on by education

[1] The Egyptian writing already had alphabetical signs; and it is generally supposed that a Semitic people living in Egypt (it may have been the Hyksos) carried out the hint thus given and developed a proper alphabet. See Isaac Taylor's 'The Alphabet,' vol. i. chap. ii.; Stade's Hebrew Grammar, § 18.

of some kind. The existence of finished composition at the time at which we start, and the general ability to read which is thereby implied, can only be explained by a considerable period of preparation and exercise. The question would then remain whether there is any time, or whether there are any periods, otherwise suitable for stimulating and maintaining such an activity, and whether we can detect traces of its actual existence before the century to which we are confining ourselves.

To begin with old songs, there is now no longer the necessity to suppose that they were handed down orally for want of the power to write. The song of Deborah, for instance, which admittedly bears the stamp of the age to which it relates, may have come down in writing even from that period. The Montenegrins are in the habit of writing contemporary history in the form of ballads;[1] and the women of the modern Bedawîn stir up the valour of their husbands by improvised songs.[2] The custom is therefore ancient; and if the power to write is also ancient, it is not necessary to suppose that such songs were entirely left to oral transmission. Again, the "legal documents and family reminiscences" out of which Wellhausen allows that early history was written, could have been of very ancient date, and of much more voluminous compass than he supposes; for the writing on stone which he thinks was the practice at the earliest times, turns out to have been a writing on clay tablets; and judging from the contents of the tablets of Tell-el-Amarna, they may have been the depositories of very minute and multifarious details. Sayce, indeed, has long supposed that ex-

[1] Ranke, Hist. of Servia, Bohn's transl., p. 411 ff. Cf. p. 49 ff.

[2] See Mrs Finn's interesting paper in Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1879, p. 42.

cavations at Kirjath-sepher or Tyre may reveal buried libraries of this material such as have been unearthed at Nineveh.

Even if we find compositions dating ostensibly from a time at which writing is not known to have been practised, it is not absolutely necessary to regard them as compositions of a later age; for oral tradition, for certain kinds of literature, is stronger than we might at first sight suppose. Max Müller, writing on this subject,[1] after stating that written literature is a very late invention in most countries, and that in India we have no trace of books before the fifth century B.C., says: "It is true that oral tradition, before the invention of writing and printing, had proved itself a very safe guardian of poetry, and few would doubt that the earliest poetry which we know in India and Greece goes back at least to 1000 B.C. But it may go back, for all we know, to 2000 or 3000 B.C." Other things than poetry, however, can be so preserved. Jerome[2] mentions that Jewish children were taught to say by heart the Genealogies; and I myself came across a shopkeeper in the East who could repeat, without the book, the first chapter of St Matthew, but could with difficulty read a few verses from the first chapter of St John. It is to be observed that, as in this case, the cultivation of memory does not cease with, nor is superseded by, the introduction of writing and printing. Children in modern Eastern schools perform feats of memory that are almost incredible; but the passages repeated are committed to memory from the printed page. In view of such facts, it should not excite so much surprise or suspicion that we have

[1] 'Good Words' for August 1887.

[2] On Titus iii. 9—Calmet's Dict., article "Genealogies." Cf. Prol. to Ecclus., and Ecclus. xxxviii. 24, 26; xxxix. 1-11.

compositions in the Old Testament professing to come from a very early time.

Turning now from these indications of the ability to write, if we search for historical occasions which may have stimulated it into exercise, we naturally look for the rise of a national literature at a time of some active stirring of the national life. Times when nations have achieved something are times when they wish to record what they have done; times when they brace themselves up for a great effort are those times in which feeling and purpose seek to stamp themselves in permanent form in writing. Such times there were long before the period of the Syrian wars. The period of Moses is such a time, at which, if there is any truth at all in the traditions regarding it, the art of writing, if known, as it is admitted to have been, would have found exercise in formal composition.[1] The statements here and there in the Pentateuch, that Moses wrote this and that, are not mere guesses or embellishments by a later writer, for such a one would have more probably ascribed to him the whole Pentateuch. Moreover, the references to the 'Book of the Wars of the Lord' and the 'Book of Jashar' scarcely look like indications that the works in question were almost contemporaneous: they rather suggest the inference that literary treasures were already existent and recognised; and the slight notices of writing at succeeding times give the impression that writing was not an innovation, but a matter of course. Nor are there wanting other suitable times anterior to the eighth century. Such are the times of Samuel and David, when the national spirit was deeply stirred and national expectations at the strongest tension. Such also is the time of Solomon, when the building

[1] Rawlinson—Moses, His Life and Times, pp. 30, 31.

of the Temple and palace at Jerusalem quickened a new industrial life, and when luxury demanded an increase of agriculture, and was fed by the commerce in which the royal fleet was engaged—not to speak of the activity and enterprise of the dynasty of Omri in the northern kingdom. Any or all of these periods, anterior to the eighth century, were just such as would have quickened into exercise a power which was certainly possessed by Israel, and would have been favourable to the production of a literature of a national kind. The point is, that the Hebrews *did* know the art of writing, and therefore needed only some such stimulus to develop it into that of literary composition. What is insisted on is that writing, including reading, implies some sort of education. Whether the people as a whole had this benefit or not, there must have been provision for imparting instruction in the circles where reading and writing were possessed; and as we have seen, Sayce argues, from the existence of the clay tablets referred to, that schools must have existed all over the country before the exodus.

A similar conclusion must be drawn in regard to religious instruction. When we find an age like that of Amos and Hosea in which religious discourse was common and well understood, and a religious vocabulary well developed, we must conclude that by some means, formal or informal, this power to converse on religious subjects had been produced and fostered. Religion and religious conversation were clearly not things confined to learned or professional circles, but were matters of popular interest. Can we find traces of anything that could have fostered this as a popular activity? The so-called "schools of the prophets" have been the subject of much fanciful speculation, and modern critical writers make very merry

over those who see in them anything like an educational institution. But in spite of the exaggerated importance that has been assigned to them, and in spite of the ridicule of the critics, the subject is worth consideration, when we are in search of some link that will connect a non-literary with a literary age.

Let us go back to the books of Samuel, which, whatever may be the date of their composition, are admitted to contain authentic information of the times to which they relate. The rude and unsettled age of the Judges is passing away. The lead in national affairs which had been taken by local heroes from time to time as occasion called them forth, is now in the hands of Samuel, whose position resembles that of Moses and Joshua. In his time we see springing up two national institutions, the monarchy and prophecy, through whose influences the civil and religious institutions of Israel are to acquire a more organised form. As to Samuel's own activity, "all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that he was established to be a prophet of the Lord" (1 Sam. iii. 20): "He judged Israel all the days of his life; and went from year to year in circuit to Beth-el, to Gilgal and Mizpeh, and judged Israel in all those places. And his return was to Ramah; for there was his house" (1 Sam. vii. 15-17). What, however, is of special interest for us at present is the mention for the first time of certain societies or bands of prophets in Samuel's days; and in spite of Stade's sneer that the so-called "schools of the prophets" have been in ancient and even in modern times a favourite hobby with those who delight in fanciful and *dilettante* study of the Old Testament,[1] I must dwell for a little on this remarkable feature of the religious history of Israel.

[1] Geschichte, i. p. 478, note.

I do not, in the meantime, call them schools, nor do I think they were such in the ordinary sense of the word; but I think it will appear exceedingly probable that they exercised a powerful educational influence even from a literary point of view.

The first mention of these prophetic bands is on the occasion of Samuel taking leave of Saul after announcing to him that he was to be king. The Benjamite is told that when he comes to the hill [Gibeah] of God, he will meet a company of prophets "coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp," &c. (1 Sam. x. 5, 6). Later on, when David fled from Saul to Samuel, he came and dwelt in Naioth; . . . and when Saul sent messengers to take him, they encountered the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as their head, &c. (1 Sam. xix. 18-24). We shall have to speak of this movement in its religious aspect by-and-by. In the meantime we take it as certain that there was, in Samuel's days, some society of prophets, bound together by some religious tie, and occupied with some kind of religious functions. These notices bring us down to the eve of David's reign; and we hear no more of such associations in the times of Solomon, or of the kings who reigned immediately after the disruption; but an incidental notice (1 Kings xx. 35) relating to the time of Ahab, of "a certain man of the sons of the prophets," as if the order was well known, makes it probable that the associations, in some form or other, were never broken up. When we come to the time of Elisha we have quite a number of detailed notices, which show us that by that time these societies were numerous and influential. When Elijah is taking leave of Elisha, the two pass from Gilgal to Beth-el, and from thence to Jericho; and at both places

the sons of the prophets come out to meet them. Probably these places only are mentioned because they lay in the way, and there may have been similar societies elsewhere. At Gilgal itself Elisha is seen with the sons of the prophets sitting before him (2 Kings iv. 38); and a little farther on they complain to him that the place of their settlement is too strait for them, and propose to bring timber from the Jordan to make a more commodious dwelling (2 Kings vi. 1 ff). Elisha, however, does not confine himself to Gilgal, but is found dwelling also at Carmel (2 Kings ii. 25) and at Samaria (2 Kings vi. 32). The prophets seem to have been a numerous body in the country. In the time of Ahab it is said that when Jezebel cut off the prophets of Jahaveh, Obadiah took a hundred of them, and hid them by fifty in a cave (1 Kings xviii. 4). At the parting of Elijah from Elisha, fifty of the sons of the prophets of Jericho stood to view afar off as the two took their way to the Jordan (2 Kings ii. 1-7); and in Elisha's community at Gilgal one hundred are mentioned as present on one occasion (2 Kings iv. 38-44). Finally, we have incidental notices as to their organisation and mode of life. The head of the society is treated with the greatest respect, as we see in the cases of Samuel and Elisha, being called *father* or *master* (1 Sam. x. 12; 2 Kings ii. 3). He is attended by a *famulus*, or intimate servant. Elisha is described as the man who "poured water on the hands of Elijah" (2 Kings iii. 11); and Elisha is served in the same manner by Gehazi (2 Kings iv., v., viii.) Elisha's appointment as his master's successor is ordered to be solemnised by anointing (1 Kings xix. 16)—though there is no mention of its being done; and lastly, though they lived together in communities, wearing, as some suppose, coarse garments, and nourishing themselves on plain fare

(2 Kings iv. 38 ff.; 1 Kings xix. 6), they were not necessarily celibates; for we hear of a "certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets," who had fallen into poverty after her husband's death, and in whose behalf Elisha wrought a miracle to save her from seeing her two sons taken to be bondmen by her creditor (2 Kings iv. 1).

These notices, drawn mainly from those stories of the prophets incorporated in the books of Kings, which admittedly belong to this first period of literary composition, may be accepted as the statement of what every one believed at the time they were written; they are too numerous, too varied, and too detailed, to be treated as afterthoughts, or idealising of facts; and, in short, may be taken as historical, since there was no object to be served by inventing them. They amount to this: that these societies or associations, whatever was their precise constitution, were a recognised thing, well rooted in Israel a century or so before Amos wrote. Now when we turn to Amos himself, we find proof that they were equally well known and recognised in his days. "I am no prophet, nor son of a prophet" (Amos vii. 14, 15), he says, disclaiming connection with them for himself (in what sense we shall see by-and-by), but attesting their existence. It is not necessary at present to follow their history farther down. What has been said has been advanced to show that the appearance of the men usually called writing prophets was not a sudden thing without any preparation, and more particularly because possibly we may have here the link connecting the so-called non-literary with the alleged first literary age.

Those who would minimise the culture and attainments of the pre-prophetic age, as they call it, of course make very little of these associations of the prophets as elevat-

ing influences in the nation; in fact they ridicule them as disorderly and disreputable societies. This is how Wellhausen speaks of the prophetic bands in Samuel's time:[1] "Troops of ecstatic enthusiasts showed themselves here and there, and went about with musical accompaniments in processions which often took the form of wild dances; even men of the most sedate temperament were sometimes smitten with the contagion, and drawn into the charmed circle. In such a phenomenon, occurring in the East, there was nothing intrinsically strange; among the Canaanites, such 'Nebiim'—for so they were styled—had long been familiar, and they continued to exist in the country after the old fashion, long after their original character, so far as Israel was concerned, had been wholly lost. The new thing at this juncture was that this spirit passed over upon Israel, and that the best members of the community were seized by it. It afforded an outlet for the suppressed excitement of the nation."

The incongruity of setting Samuel at the head of such a noisy crew (though the best members of the community are admitted to have been infected) Wellhausen gets over by the assumption of two contradictory traditions. The story of Saul's appearance at Naioth in Ramah where David was, and of his being overpowered by the prophetic influence, is, we are told,[2] "a pious caricature; the point can be nothing but Samuel's and David's enjoyment of the disgrace of the naked king;" and Wellhausen, who is our caricaturist for the moment, goes on to say: "For the general history of the tradition the most interesting circumstance is that Samuel has here become the head of a school of prophets, and the leader of their exercises. In the original view

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 449.

[2] Ibid., p. 268.

of the matter (chaps. ix., x.) he appears alone and independent, and has nothing to do with the companies of the ecstatics, the Nebiim. He is a *Rōeh* or seer, not a Nabi or prophet. True, it is asserted in the gloss (ix. 9) that the two words mean the same thing—that what is now called Nabi was formerly called Rōeh. But that is scarcely quite correct. The author of ix., x. knows the name Nabi very well too, but he never applies it to Samuel; he only uses it in the plural, of the troops of Jehovah—intoxicated dervishes."

As to the later associations of prophets, he says:[1] "In the time of Ahab and Jehu, the Nebiim were a widespread body, and organised in orders of their own, but they were not highly respected; the average of them were miserable fellows, who ate out of the king's hand, and were treated with disdain by members of the leading classes. Amos of Tekoa, who, it is true, belonged to a younger generation, felt it an insult to be counted one of them. Elijah and Elisha rose certainly above the level of their order; but the first, whose hands remained pure, while he no doubt produced a great impression at the time by his fearless words, effected nothing against the king, and quite failed to draw the people over to his side; while Elisha, who did effect something, made use of means which could not bear the light, and which attest rather the weakness than the strength of prophecy in Israel."

Stade writes in the same vein, and is even more lively. The ancient seer, according to him, was one who had second-sight; but the prophets were distinguished from them in that "they appear in bands and swarms, sometimes crowding into fixed places, at other times wandering

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 293.

through the country, always infecting new individuals and drawing them into their ranks. Clairvoyance with them gives place to the noisy utterances of possession. God's hand moves them so mightily that they rave and roar, dance and spring, and pour out in torrents whatever He suggests to them. The accession of this passionate excitement is skilfully aided by noisy music. . . . In short, from the descriptions that we have of prophetic activity in ancient times, there can be no doubt that here is a manifestation of the same 'sacred disease' which inspired the servants of Dionysos even to frenzy, which led the priests of the Syrian goddess to wound and maim themselves, which can be observed even at the present day in the dervishes of the Mohammedan East, and among them also produces such wonderful feats and such repulsive acts, and which lends to such fanatics as these the character of holiness, even when the possession impels them to immoral deeds."[1]

All this is neither more nor less than a miserable travesty of the accounts which lie before us: it seems to me, further, to be a mistake from the point of view of those writers themselves. For the position taken up leaves little room for the development which they are so fond of tracing, and practically forces them to regard the writing prophets as sudden apparitions, without anything in the antecedent history out of which they could have been developed. Apart from this, however, I must particularly refer to the attitude of Samuel and Amos, at the two ends of the series, to these prophetic companies. The endeavour is made, as it has been

[1] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 476 ff. The reader should, however, here turn to 1 Kings xviii. 26 ff., and contrast the bearing of Elijah with that of the prophets of Baal.

seen, to dissociate both men from the prophetic companies, but I think without the slightest ground. Wellhausen's statements amount to this: Samuel stood alone and independent, apart from the Nebiim, although "the best members of the community were seized by" the spirit that prevailed; and further, a later tradition put him at the head of the school, although the men composing these schools were for the most part a miserable lot of fellows, and Amos disdained to be counted as belonging to them. Surely the later tradition did not mean to *degrade* Samuel by putting him at the head of the prophets; and yet, if they were generally viewed as is represented, it was no honour. The truth is, there is no reason, except the requirements of Wellhausen's theory, for doubting what is said of Samuel's connection with the prophets. And then as to Amos, I am sure that no one but a modern critic could interpret his words as they do. The priest of Beth-el, Amaziah, had said to him, "O thou seer,[1] go, flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy there," &c.; to which Amos replied, "I am no prophet, neither the son of a prophet; but I am an herdman, and a dresser of sycamore trees: and Jahaveh took me as I followed the flock, and Jahaveh said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel" (Amos vii. 12-15). How these words can be twisted into an expression of contempt for the prophets I cannot conceive. The contrast which Amos draws is between a

[1] Wellhausen strives hard to make out that the names Roeh (seer) and Nabi (prophet) had different significations in the time of Samuel, and that the distinction only gradually faded away. This he does in order to place the Roeh above the flagellant Nabi, as he terms him. It is worth noticing, however, that, in the passage of Amos referred to, the two terms seem to be convertible; and also that in Gen. xx. 7 (which belongs to E.—see Note VIII.) Abraham is called a Nabi.

professional prophet and a humble herdman following the flock: and the only fair inference to be drawn is, that he did not pretend to any trained skill in prophesying; that he did not derive his commission from any order of men; that the truth he delivered was not learned in any school. Jahaveh took him. He may mean this simply and nothing more; if he means to give any opinion of the prophets and the sons of the prophets, it is more likely to be favourable than the reverse, as if he had said, "I do not pretend to the skill or authority of a prophet; I am but a common peasant." But we need be in no doubt on the subject; for Amos elsewhere, in recounting God's great deeds for His people, mentions the giving of prophets (ii. 11). Who, we ask, were the prophets to whom he could here allude as a class of God-appointed men? We know of none that were not connected with the prophetic class with which our critics would have Amos disdain to be identified. The whole interpretation is forced; and though, *if the theory were proved*, the words of Amos in this passage *might* be construed to agree with it—making him, however, inconsistent with himself in another place—the words cannot by any means be taken as even a plausible support of it.

I take it, then, that there were societies or guilds of prophets from Samuel's time, and that the best men of the time were either connected with them, or regarded them as composed of men devoted to Jahaveh's service; and I think we may find in them something that will help to explain the literary and religious features of the century we are considering. We do not know much of the occupations of these sons of the prophets; and of their earlier societies, particularly, in the time of Samuel, we only obtain glimpses. But this we know: they had

a religious basis; for though Wellhausen says they arose out of the oppression of the Philistines, he admits that "religion and patriotism were then identical." We find also that music was practised among them (and even as late as the time of Elisha, that prophet is described as calling for a minstrel to play before he delivered his prophecy—2 Kings iii. 15). Now as to the former, we know that religion combined with patriotism characterised all the prophets; and their patriotism expressed itself in what we may call a theory or philosophy of the national history, the chief elements of which were a conviction that Jahaveh had specially guided the nation in the past, and a belief that He had in store for it a noble future. The germs of such a theory of the history were present in the "religion tinged with patriotism" of the very earliest prophetic movement. Now it will be evident there is room here for study, and in this germ we have the beginnings of the Biblical conception of history. The events of the past, the movements of the present, the prospects of the future, are of deep interest to men possessed with this central idea of their national life. If I mistake not, Wellhausen himself bears unwilling testimony to this fact.[1] Summing up his critical estimate of the historical books, he says that the specific character of Israelite history, which has chiefly led to its being called *sacred* history, rests for the most part on the repainting of the original picture. But he adds, "The discolouring influences begin early;" and by this he means "that uniform stamp impressed on the tradition by men who regarded history exclusively from the point of view of their own principles." In fact, there is "a religious influence, which in the books of Samuel and Kings turns out

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 293 f.

to be the prophetical one." He will not allow, however, that it is to the prophets that the Hebrew people owe their history as a whole; and "least of all can the colleges of the B'ne Nebiim ["sons of the prophets"] at Gilgal and other places, be regarded as nurseries of historic tradition." But when he speaks of the "old books of the people," which the prophets remodelled for the edification of the new generation, we must not forget that, according to his own estimate of the literary history, these must have been produced just about the time that these colleges of the prophets flourished; and he neither tells us who could have been the writers of them, nor who were the "earlier prophets" to whom the writing prophets refer as their forerunners. In point of fact, the very earliest prophets are historians, politicians, and prophets in the narrower sense of the word; and there is no reason to doubt that the societies, even of Samuel's days, called into existence in the way Wellhausen describes, had made a start on all the three lines. We know that some of the writing prophets were also historians; and even modern writers admit that history begins about the time of Samuel. It is remarkable that the book of Chronicles, which, of course, the critics will not admit to be historical, mentions, besides Samuel, among the early writers of history, Nathan and Gad, showing a belief on the part of the writer, at all events, and presumably a national tradition, that these earlier prophets were also writers of history. And then as to the musical occupations of these prophetic companies, it is a remarkable thing that the persistent tradition of the nation ascribes to David the chief place among poets and musicians, and that these associations existed in his youth, and he himself is seen frequenting them.

If we admit the existence of these so-called schools at all, we must give the inmates something to do connected with the religion and fortunes of the nation. Now, as we find history and poetry coming into prominence just after their institution, and a language fully developed ready to the hand of those who wrote in the eighth century, and as we have no knowledge of any other circles in which such literary exercises could be carried on, it is not a stretch of imagination, but a safe deduction, that we have in these societies of the prophets something that would explain what would otherwise be difficult of explanation — the sudden appearance of finished literary composition—if that is a fact; or if it is not, something that represents an earlier stage of literary activity. The time and circumstances of the first appearance of these societies are such as would give an impulse to religious life. The quickening of the national pulse in the struggle with the Philistines, the revival of zeal under the influence of Samuel, the retirement of some kind of cenobite life, and the contact of men of kindred spirit in these societies—all these tended to create or develop culture, and would likewise be powerful factors in the production of the religious consciousness of the time. Given the power to write, and such incentives as these, there is no reason why many of the compositions crowded together into the so-called first literary age may not in whole or in part belong to an earlier period.

In view of an activity like this, we are not so much at a loss to understand how it came about that readers were common at the time of the first writing prophets, and how the religious vocabulary was well developed. We do not require to suppose that these societies retained within themselves all the culture of the times—far from it; but

they would be rallying-points and powerful aids to its general support and propagation. We have also—what is quite in keeping with the references of Amos and Hosea to former prophets—a succession of men such as Nathan, Gad, Iddo, and others, who must be taken to be actual historical characters, and who are described as "prophets" or "seers." We have no reason to suppose that they were of a class opposed to or out of harmony with the prophetic companies. If it is not to such men that Amos and Hosea refer, we know of no others; if they are the men, then we get men of flesh and blood such as were the prophets whose writings are before us—men who were quite capable of handing on the lamp of learning such as existed in that age, and, what was of more importance, of keeping the torch of religious truth burning. It is not a great stretch of imagination to think of these men, in their intercourse with one another, and in the assemblies of the people that gathered about them, encouraging one another and animating one another by reciting the deeds of valour and the victories of faith of their forefathers, the patriarchs and the judges, tuning their harps to patriotic religious songs composed to celebrate memorable deeds, and forecasting the future of their nation which such deeds led them to expect. If we regard men like these as the natural guardians of the popular traditions, we shall be at no loss to understand how these traditions are tinged with religion, nay, steeped in religion, to such an extent as to mark them out from the popular mythological tales of other early nations. They have all the appearance, not of tales of folk-lore gathered up from the mouths of the people and touched up for a national and religious end,[1] but of traditions

[1] Wellhausen, p. 294.

piously treasured up, brooded over and protected by men who of old were imbued with religious feeling and impressed with the conviction of a Divine Hand guiding their nation's history. Cut and carve them as we may, by eliminating "later additions," and so forth, they cannot be resolved ultimately into mere fanciful stories, told for amusement, freaks of a playful imagination, indulged in for their own sake. In the simplest narratives there are touches of insight; reduced to their barest originals they are pervaded with a purpose. By the time of Hosea we can see (Hosea xii. 3, 4, 12) that the stories of the patriarchs were not only well known, but used, we may say, as texts for discourses, and handled in a homiletic and didactic manner—a proof that they had been long known and treasured in prophetic circles, and were regarded not as odds and ends of stories, but as parts of a connected history.

Our purpose is not primarily to inquire into the origin and mode of composition of the earlier historical books, but to test their historical value; and our present argument is to show the sort of men who were the guardians and vouchers of the tradition. The point to which we have come, however, has an essential bearing on the question of the composition of the books. In the Hebrew canon the books from Joshua on to the Second Book of Kings are designated "the earlier prophets," the idea underlying this title being that the books proceeded from prophetic men; and a fair consideration of the facts that have been stated will lead to the conclusion that the supposition is not a mere unfounded conjecture. It is remarked by Wellhausen, as we have just seen, that the books in question have all a strong prophetic tinge, which, of course, he places late.

But it is also admitted that parts at least of the books of Judges and Samuel, and an element in the book of Genesis, belong to the first literary age. Now, if it should turn out that this first literary age was one in which prophetic tendencies were well developed, or at least prophetic principles were firmly fixed in their main conceptions, there will be no necessity of separating by wide intervals of time parts of the same narrative which otherwise hang well enough together. This view of the subject, however, will be more fully considered in the next chapter. In the meantime attention is to be drawn here to another feature of these historical books, which is closely related to the mode of their composition and their historical value—namely, the minute accuracy they exhibit in matters of topography.

Perhaps no country has been more attentively examined in connection with its history and literature than Palestine; and those who have made the most careful examination have testified to the extraordinary correspondence, to the minutest detail, between the Biblical accounts and the localities in which they are placed. This does not, of course, warrant us in saying straightway that the narratives are strictly historical, but it has an important bearing on the mode of composition of the books. It will, on reflection, be admitted that a writer or speaker nowhere runs greater risk of tripping and falling into error than when dealing with details of topography. It is a case in which mere popular and oral recital is almost sure after a time to be at fault, and in which memory cannot long be safely trusted. It is also to be noted that the remarkable physical configuration of Palestine, and the graphic pictorial style of Hebrew diction, made the danger of falling into mistakes

of this kind immensely greater. The Hebrew writers are continually painting the scene of their narratives, not only reproducing the words and gestures of the speakers, but telling us how they "lifted up their eyes" and saw this and that; and the conformation of the country is so remarkable, its variations of scene, climate, and physical condition such, that the accuracy of delineation, which bears the closest investigation, is nothing short of marvellous. It is indeed only in comparatively recent times that this has been fully brought to light; for not only the Crusaders, but even the early Christian monks who resided in the country, made mistakes in identifications of Biblical sites, which it has been left to travellers and explorers of our own century to rectify.[1] It would not be difficult to find in modern authors writing from memory or with imperfect information, instances to prove how easily mistakes may be fallen into. Walter Scott, *e.g.* (and no doubt it is not a solitary instance), makes one of his characters[2] speak of Roseneath as an island, a kind of mistake never committed by a Biblical writer. An instructive example may be taken from a passage in Wellhausen's own book, in which, in connection with the story of the destruction of the cities of the plain, mention is made of "the smoke of the furnace which Abraham saw from the Jewish shore the morning after the catastrophe."[3] It is true the English transla-

[1] The Quarterly Statements of the Palestine Exploration Fund are full of corrections of such early mistakes. See, *e.g.*, the Statements for 1875, p. 89 ff.; and for 1876, pp. 11 ff., 37 f., 168; for 1877, p. 33 ff. To name no other places, Robinson mentions that even such a famous place as Beth-el was not known accurately to the monks for centuries, the name of the true site being preserved solely among the common people.—Biblical Researches, second edition, vol. i. p. 449.

[2] Heart of Mid-Lothian, chap. xl.

[3] Hist. of Israel, p. 325.

tion makes the mistake more glaring; but even in the original[1] the words do not accurately represent the statement of the Biblical writer, according to which[2] Abraham was not near the Dead Sea at the time of the occurrence, but at Mamre, and could not even have seen the shore. What the narrator says is that Abraham "got up early in the morning to the place where he had stood before Jahaveh," and that "he looked *toward* Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and lo! the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." It is a great distance from Hebron to the Dead Sea, and mountains intervene for the most part. Robinson tells us that he ascended the hills to the east of the town in hopes of obtaining a view of the country, but the prospect was limited towards the east and north by higher hills near at hand. Next day, however, on ascending the hill to the west, he found the prospect towards the east and south and west very extensive, Kerak (on the eastern side of the Dead Sea) being very clearly distinguishable.[3] A more glaring mistake is made in Lenormant's 'Ancient History of the East,' where we have such a collocation as this: "Between Bethel and Hai in the rich pastures of the lower Jordan,"[4] though these places are far from the river. In striking contrast we find the Biblical writer particularly stating that the place of Abraham's encampment was a *mountain* east of Bethel,[5]—a situation from which, as travellers have pointed out,[6] Lot could have

[1] The original is "vom judäischen Ufer aus aufsteigen sah."—Geschichte, 1878, p. 329.

[2] Gen. xix. 27.

[3] Biblical Researches, second edition, vol. ii. pp. 82, 85.

[4] English translation, vol. i. p. 81.

[5] Gen. xii. 8.

[6] Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, third edition, p. 217 f.

obtained that view of the fertile Jordan valley which determined his choice.[1] And once more, as an instance how in statements of topography one will readily make a slip in matters with which he is well acquainted, a recent critical writer tells us that Elijah, on the memorable occasion of his sacrifice on Mount Carmel, "hurried the priests of Baal down to the brook Jabbok, and slew them there,"[2]—a much more "considerable mistake" than that which Wellhausen thinks he finds in the Biblical writer's account of Elijah's movements.[3]

As an example, on the other hand, of the very minute accuracy of the Biblical narratives in this respect, we may take the account of Elijah's sacrifice on Mount Carmel.[4] The scene of the narrative, which had been little visited by travellers, was found on the eastern extremity of Carmel, overlooking the great plain of Esdraelon, and was known to the natives by the name *El-Muhrakah, The Burnt* (or the place of burning); and all who have visited it, and compared it with the account given of the events of that memorable day, testify to the correspondence in minutest details between the narrative and the locality.[5] Now all this goes to show that there is more in these stories than what Wellhausen calls "a local colour which bespeaks a local origin."[6] Much less can we admit what he asserts in regard to the patriarchal stories, that their significance is "entirely bound up with the locality,"[7] and that "for the most part we have the product of a countless number of narrators, unconsciously modifying

[1] Gen. xiii. 10. [2] Allan Menzies, Natural Religion, p. 135.
[3] Hist. of Israel, p. 292, note. [4] 1 Kings xviii.
[5] A graphic account is given by Van de Velde, vol. i. p. 320 ff., with which may be compared Stanley, Sinai and Palestine, third edition, p. 353.
[6] Hist. of Israel, p. 327. [7] Ibid., p. 325.

each other's work."[1] The ordinary reader will find it very hard to believe that in "the manifold variants and repetitions of the same stories" this feature of minutely accurate local picturing could have been preserved. And when we take into account that not only in the stories of the patriarchs, but everywhere in the historical books, this accuracy is maintained, and bear in mind the liability to error which is inherent in oral transmission, we have a problem to solve which cannot be brushed aside by these *obiter dicta* of Wellhausen. If these stories could not have maintained their topographical accuracy in oral tradition, then they were written by men who knew the localities and had them before their eye; and if the stories have not foundation in fact, then the writer—and be it remembered this is one of the admitted earliest class of writings—was not merely a spinner or retailer of myths, but he was a most accomplished writer of romance. A recent French writer, who has made in all seriousness a *reductio ad absurdum* of criticism by denying almost entirely the pre-exilian existence of literature in Israel,[2] has the courage of his theory here, and it is interesting to observe how he accounts for this striking accuracy of topographical details. He fancies a company of theologians at the time of the restoration sitting down to see

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 327.

[2] Maurice Vernes, Les Résultats de l'Exégèse Biblique, p. 50. If refutation is necessary of such a view, it is found in the fact that the *names* of Bible places have been in most cases recovered from the mouths of the peasantry—a proof that the story has clung to the site from most ancient time. Were Vernes's view correct, we should have had a number of sites such as the Crusaders and monks determined *by the book*, whereas we have these ancient names, often unintelligible to the natives, and unassociated, to their knowledge, with any ancient event. And this aspect of British research should be fairly faced in critical reconstructions of history and books.

who would give the most highly coloured account of early times; and the one, for example, who by report at least knew most of Egypt, would take in hand the story of the exodus, and so on. He does not tell us how many men, each with special knowledge of a locality, were engaged in this work; but such a fancy, by its exaggeration, gives us some idea of the care that must have been bestowed on small details in the writing of these Old Testament stories —a care far above what we would expect in the case of plastic material modified by hundreds of reciters, and touched and retouched till the time of the captivity and after it.[1] Whatever we may say about them, this characteristic of these narratives must raise our estimate of the literary care and ability of these writers; and if we find them so careful in this class of details, we may be prepared to give more heed to them when they give us particulars of another kind.

No doubt this minute topographical accuracy does not in itself vouch for the historical truth of the narratives, and to some extent there is reason for the reproach of a Continental writer[2] that "English Palestine research, by its apologetic tendency, runs the risk of failing to secure recognition as a complete international science." German scholars, he says, while quite as well aware as the English investigators of the close connection of this specialty with the scientific interpretation of the Bible, "have at the same time the historical, critical, and philological preparation which is necessary to successful labour." In their view, it is "an essential point that Palestine research remain in the closest contact with these other branches of study," and that "a scholar who writes on the geography

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 294.

[2] Socin, in the Expositor, third series, vol. ii. p. 241 ff.

of Palestine, shall first have made himself thoroughly familiar with the problems and results of Old Testament criticism," for "only there can he form a judgment concerning the real history of Israel." All very good; but it may be contended as strenuously, on the other hand, that the said German scholars should, in estimating the literary products of Israel, take into account this feature of them to which we call attention, and not merely dismiss them with the remark that they have a strong local colouring. Perhaps if German scholars had gone more out into the broad light of day, and looked at these narratives in connection with the places to which they relate, instead of keeping their science, to use Socin's own words, "under ground, in the esoteric circle of special students," they would have attained results more acceptable to average common-sense. No doubt, strictly speaking, the identification of the place does not prove the historic truth of the event associated with it. It is, it may be admitted, "unjustifiable to assume without further investigation that the list of stations in the wandering in the wilderness is the work of Moses;"[1] nay, we are not, strictly speaking, entitled to assume that the Israelites ever travelled that way at all. The list may be a mere feat of archæological research, drawn up by those who knew the ordinary route through these parts. Neither does the topography of Mount Carmel, which suits the story of Elijah as exactly as if it was written on the spot, prove even that Elijah ever existed; and Dean Stanley was not strictly correct when he asserted[2] that "the wells of Beersheba in the wide frontier-valley of Palestine are indisputable witnesses of the life of Abraham."

[1] Socin, *l. c.* Compare Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 350.

[2] Sinai and Palestine, p. 148.

But neither was Carlyle justified in assuming from the ruins of St Edmundsbury that St Edmund ever existed; nor do the stones stuck here and there in the plain of Leipzig, telling where so many thousands of men had their position under certain commanders, prove that a great battle was ever fought there. Let us criticise our authorities by all means. But let us not turn away from such firm palpable aids to criticism as we possess, to "underground" canons which only esoteric students can comprehend. It will occur to many, that if it is unjustifiable to construct a map of Palestine showing the tribal divisions, a good many other maps will have to be accepted with reserve. The ordinary reader who believes, with Thomas Carlyle, that "man has ever been, in spite of wide-spread calumnies to the contrary, a veracious creature," will be anxious to know why it is that so much criticism is necessary in regard to matters of Biblical history such as are accepted without question in other fields. Wellhausen's off-hand remark about "plastic and living materials" and stories whose significance was "entirely bound up with the locality," is quite insufficient to explain the fact that this minute accuracy is not confined to one set of stories nor to one locality. The point of the story so often turns upon the local situation, and stories so constructed in one locality fit in so exactly to others constructed for other localities, as in Abraham's sojourns at different spots, making a connected history, that this explanation is altogether too superficial. Instead of the materials being so plastic as he supposes in the ninth and eighth centuries, it is evident that the writers of these narratives were handling no shadowy myth, but writing of men who were as real to them as men of their own age. We are, in short, in these

narratives, not at the stage of floating vague tradition, but at a time at which men wrote with care about persons and events that they considered historical. What more is implied in this fact we shall consider more fully in the next chapter.

In our endeavour to estimate the amount of literary and educational activity in ancient Israel, we must not overlook the work of the priests, who were at least as early and as well marked a class as the prophets. Although a great part of the admitted literature is of a popular or prophetic character, yet Wellhausen has told us (above, p. 61) that at an early period "certain collections of laws and decisions of the priests" were also committed to writing. The "legal documents" also, and "family reminiscences," which furnished materials for the first historiography, were most probably, as in other countries, under priestly custody; and Stade says[1] that it was under priestly influence that the patriarchal legends assumed their peculiar form. All this implies a considerable degree of literary activity; and the preservation of legal and family documents presupposes such activity in a still earlier time. Though their literary labours may have been chiefly technical, and restricted to a somewhat professional circle, yet in their work as popular educators the priests must take rank with the prophets. The bearing of this on the more outward features of the religion will be seen in the sequel.[2]

[1] Geschichte, vol. i. p. 145. [2] See particularly chap. xv. p. 391.

CHAPTER V.

TESTIMONY OF THE NINTH AND EIGHTH CENTURIES TO THE ANTECEDENT HISTORY.

Following up the conclusions of preceding chapters, the inquiry is raised whether it is possible, from the admitted writings, to determine the outstanding facts of the previous history—Not a question of the order of composition of books, or of origin of observances, but an appeal to the consciousness of the nation—Amos and Hosea are found to hold essentially, for the period succeeding Moses, the same scheme of history which is by modern critics pronounced to be late and unhistorical—Their testimony confirmed by the song of Deborah—In regard to patriarchal history, the intimations of the prophets, so far as they go, are in accord with the Pentateuch—Wellhausen's dictum in regard to the patriarchal stories examined; an illustration of his method of interpretation—His explanation of the genealogical system: its failure to account for Abraham—His canon at fault in regard to "outward features"—Peculiarities distinguishing patriarchal stories from Gentile legends—Nebular hypothesis of early history—Conclusion: that the eighth century is a time of broad historic day, when Israel had a definite account to give of itself and of its early history.

In the preceding chapters it has been argued that the admitted writings of the so-called earliest literary age imply a time of antecedent preparation and training of both a literary and a religious kind. We have also seen that the earliest writing prophets appeal to prophetic men of kindred spirit before them, and we have endeavoured to show that there is evidence of such a prophetic

line from Samuel downwards, capable of giving to the history the peculiar cast in which it appears in the historical books. One feature of these books, the minute accuracy in topographical detail, has led to the conclusion that the writers of history in the so-called earliest literary period, unless they are to be regarded as clever romancers, wrote down what to them was not vague, plastic myth, but actual history. And it is claimed that this minute correspondence of locality with narrative is inconsistent with the account given by critical writers of the origin of these narratives and the trustworthiness of the writers.

Let us now go a step further and open up a new line of inquiry: Is it possible from the writings to which we have restricted ourselves to draw any conclusions with regard to the outstanding events of the antecedent history? We have precluded ourselves from accepting the books composing the Pentateuch as evidence regarding the period to which they relate. But it may be possible, from the books which we are allowed to use, to derive such indications as will either confirm the books which are reserved or show in what manner their unhistorical statements (as they are called) arose. That we need not expect to find in the prophetic writings anything like a full account of the history is evident from the very nature of the compositions, to say nothing of their very limited bulk. But by a comparison of these with one another and with other books, we may be able to draw a parallel or a contrast between the modes in which the history of the time to which we refer was regarded by the respective writers, and reach whatever conclusions we can as to the actual facts.

As to the method of this inquiry, it is to be remarked that what we seek primarily to determine is neither the

order of composition of books nor the history of religious observances. The method usually followed by apologists is to show by "references" or "quotations" that the books of the Pentateuch, for example, are older than the prophetic writings. It is obvious, however, that the argument from references and quotations may be turned the other way; and this mode of reasoning becomes very precarious and unsatisfactory, since questions of integrity and genuineness in the books supposed to be referred to are sure to arise. On the other hand, the method pursued generally by critical writers of tracing the history of the religion by the aid of outward rites and observances is liable to similar and other equally strong objections, which will be stated farther on.[1] Our point is, that in the writings of contemporaneous prophets, and admitted productions of the same age, we get upon firm ground. The slightest glance at the prophetical literature will show that the history turned upon something very different from written books or outward observances. By the time of the earliest writing prophets it is evident that certain fundamental religious conceptions are firmly grasped—a certain view is entertained of the antecedent course of religious history; for proof of which appeal is made not to written books or outward observances, but to the general consciousness of the nation. If we can penetrate to the origin of these, we shall come at a knowledge of the nation's religious life and history in a much more effectual way than by settling the order in which books were written and legal codes came into existence; and it will perhaps be found that, standing on such firm ground, we shall be in a better position to pronounce judgment on those other questions of books and institu-

[1] See chap. xiii. p. 328.

tions. What we propose, therefore, to do in the present chapter, is to inquire what views prevailed, in the period to which we have restricted ourselves, in regard to the antecedent religious history, and what inferences may safely be drawn as to the actual facts.

Confining ourselves at the outset to Amos and Hosea, we take it to be quite clear that by their time a certain outline (and from the limited materials and nature of the books we cannot expect more) of the past history of the nation, was firmly fixed and held undisputed in the national mind. Particular stress must be laid on the fact that it is not the individual testimony of two men that we have on this point, but the testimony of the generation they addressed. All the proof Amos advances, when he refers to past history, is the appeal to the knowledge of his hearers, "Is it not so, O house of Israel?" (Amos ii. 11.) And the testimony is all the stronger here because the people are unwilling witnesses, the prophet's references to the past being made not for the purpose of flattering national vanity, but of rebuking national backsliding. The argument used here is one which critical writers can employ with effect when occasion requires. Daumer,[1] for example, argues from the statement of Amos regarding worship in the wilderness (Amos v. 26 ff.), not merely that it was a fact that Israel for forty years worshipped not Jahaveh but Moloch, but also that this was a well-known and undisputed fact in the prophet's days.

Attention may be drawn, at the outset, to the manner in which these two men address their generation and speak of their nation. "Israel" stands not only for the northern kingdom, but for the combined people. And when one message is given to the whole under one name, and when

[1] Feuer und Moloch-dienst der Alten Hebräer, p. 49. So others.

Hosea has reached the stage of personifying Israel as a dearly loved but faithless wife, or as a first-born son, it is evident that we are far beyond the stage—if ever there was such a stage—when the nation grew into one from merely contiguous or even related tribes. If Hosea is to be believed, Israel was *one* people from the time of the exodus. But to pass from this, let us note certain definite points in the scheme of history held by these men.

The *first* point to be noticed is, that Amos and Hosea agree in going back to the deliverance from Egypt and the guidance through the desert as not only well-attested and undisputed facts, but as also events of the deepest religious import. Thus Amos utters the word of Jahaveh "against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying, You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos iii. 1, 2); and speaking of the great things God had done for them in the past, he says: "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was as the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yet I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath. Also I brought you up out of the land of Egypt, and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite" (Amos ii. 9-11). Similarly Hosea refers to the days of the youth of the nation—"the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt" (Hos. ii. 15). "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt" (xi. 1). Twice he uses the words, "I am Jahaveh thy God from the land of Egypt" (xii. 9, xiii. 4), basing upon this fact the claim of their God to undivided allegiance: "Thou shalt know no god but me, and beside me there is no saviour" (xiii. 4). And to denote the tender care with which they were watched in the desert, he says: "I found Israel like

grapes in the wilderness; I saw your fathers as the first-ripe in the fig-tree at her first season" (ix. 10). "I did know thee in the wilderness, in the land of great drought" (xiii. 5). Here there is one clear line, boldly drawn—one great epoch in the history vouched for by the strongest testimony we can in the circumstances expect. These two prophets—men of very different temperaments, who have very different attitudes to the people of their time—take it as a thing not gainsaid, that from the exodus Israel had been distinguished by special religious privilege manifested in a remarkable history. The way in which they refer to these events—in general terms, no doubt, but with a hortatory and didactic purpose—leaves no room for doubt that the belief was already ingrained in the nation that, to use the current phrase, they were a chosen race. The divine choice had been signally exhibited in the events of the exodus and the conquest of Canaan; and that these events were not regarded as isolated or accidental occurrences, is proved by the insistance on the continual guidance and instruction which had been communicated through "prophets," and the bestowal of other privileges which are always being brought to remembrance.

A *second* significant point, very observable in the writings of these two prophets, is the pre-eminence assigned by both of them to the southern kingdom, and the special importance of the house of David. Amos comes all the way from the south of Judah to testify against the northern kingdom, and his very first words are: "Jahaveh shall roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem" (Amos i. 2). Even the sins for which Judah is reproved give a hint of special religious privilege "Because they have rejected the law of Jahaveh, and have

not kept His statutes" (ii. 4). And then his anticipation of coming blessing is expressed in the words: "I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old" (ix. 11). All this, it will be remembered, though spoken by a native of the south, comes from a prophet whose mission was to the northern kingdom. And even more striking are the references of Hosea, a native of the northern kingdom itself. Having at the outset of his prophecy said, "I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel that I should in any wise pardon them," he immediately adds, "But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jahaveh their God" (Hos. i. 6, 7).[1] So again, "Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend" (iv. 15); and finally, though Judah is classed with Ephraim in many places, yet the prophet's anticipation is again like that of Amos. He speaks of the reunion of the two kingdoms (i. 11), and describes it in these terms: "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek Jahaveh their God, and David their king; and shall fear Jahaveh and His goodness in the latter days" (iii. 5). This, then, is an additional point gained, that even in the northern kingdom, if the testimony of Hosea and his contemporaries is of any value, the pre-eminence in religious standing of the southern kingdom was acknowledged, and the divine promise of a "sure house" to David[2] was accepted by the nation generally as a substantial fact.

[1] Hos. xi. 12 is doubtful: "Ephraim compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit; but Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints." Others render, "And Judah is yet defiant towards God, and towards the All-Holy One, who is faithful."

[2] See 2 Sam. vii. 16, xxiii. 5.

Thirdly, While, however, the prophets thus represented their God as having chosen and guided Israel from the days of Egypt, and bestowed on the nation special privileges, there is to them another aspect of the history. For they as persistently maintain that Israel, from the earliest times, had proved unfaithful to their God, and fallen into the deepest sins. Amos, in the survey which he makes, in chapters i. and ii. of his book, of the nations for whose redoubled iniquities the sentence of divine punishment would not be turned away, does not except the two kingdoms of the children of Israel, and singles out the particular sins for which they would respectively be chastised. Indeed the whole burden of his prophecy is just this, that though God had raised up of their sons for prophets, and of their young men for Nazirites (ii. 11),[1] though He had from time to time made known what He was to do through His prophets (iii. 7), though He had known Israel alone of all the families of the earth (iii. 2), yet doom was impending over both kingdoms for their unfaithfulness; and, just because of their special privileges, they would be the more severely dealt with. Still more impressively is the same truth taught by Hosea. Under the figures of the dearest earthly relationships, he represents Israel now as the wife of Jahaveh who has been unfaithful to her husband (i. 2, &c.), and again as a tenderly reared son who was bent to backsliding (xi. 7), though the divine love still yearned over them (iii. 1, xi. 8 ff., &c.) "By a prophet Jahaveh brought Israel out

[1] "The Nazirites were a class dating very far back; we find illustrious examples of them in Samson and Samuel in the time of the Judges, and no doubt there were prophets contemporary with them, though, with the exception of the prophetess Deborah, they are only incidentally mentioned (Judges vi. 8) till the time of Samuel."—A. B. Davidson in Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 39.

of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved" (xii. 13; cf. Micah vi. 4). God had "spoken unto the prophets, and multiplied visions, and by the ministry of the prophets had used similitudes" (xii. 10); yea, they had been "hewn by the prophets" (vi. 5) for their stubbornness and iniquity; yet they had "transgressed the covenant" (vi. 7), had "wandered from" their God (vii. 13), "transgressed His covenant, and trespassed against His law" (viii. 1). For their iniquities, which are specified over and over again, and set in new lights to make them more odious, they are told that "the days of visitation are come, the days of recompense are come" (ix. 7); that "the iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin laid up in store" (xiii. 12); and not even the grave will be able to cover him from the divine judgment (xiii. 14). Compare Amos ix. 2-4.

But, *fourthly*, the prophetic voice has still another tone, which is continually heard in the midst of these denunciations and threatenings. Both these prophets, addressing the people of the northern kingdom, declare, as we have seen, that the southern kingdom of Judah, though also apostate and doomed to punishment (Amos ii. 4), has not so far fallen from original fidelity; so it will be more mercifully dealt with (Hosea i. 7), and will form the rallying-point for a reunited nationality based on better principles (Amos ix. 11; Hosea i. 11). Through the severest denunciations shines ever a gleam of hope, based on the faithfulness and love of Jahaveh Himself: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my compassions are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy

Ephraim: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee" (Hosea xi. 8, 9).

Now all this agrees most strikingly with what we have called the Biblical theory of the history.[1] There is the insisting upon a special manifestation of favour to Israel at the first, in the deliverance from Egypt and guidance through the desert; there is the emphasis laid on the succession of teachers divinely appointed, and of laws and statutes for the people's instruction and guidance. There is the promise of the perpetuity of the house of David as the basis of the restoration of national unity. There is, on the other hand, with equal emphasis, the assertion of the fact that Israel had been unfaithful to the nation's God, and unworthy of the privileges bestowed. And further, there is the threatening of punishment for this unfaithfulness, reiterated in various forms and couched in the sternest tones. And finally, there is the assurance that there will not be an end of the people, but that out of the overthrow and ruin there will arise a revived and purified nation, united under one king, obedient to their one God. We have in fact here, as early as we are allowed by the limitations we have imposed upon ourselves, the prophetic philosophy of history which is the guiding principle of the prophets to the end. Favour shown, sin abounding, punishment descending, a remnant saved,—this will be found to be the scheme taught by all the prophets; the scheme on which they explain their whole history. The teaching as to the *remnant*, so characteristic of the great prophets, comes out quite incidentally in Amos, and is all the more striking on that account. Thus: "The city that used to go out (to war) a thousand (strong) shall *have a remnant* of a hun-

[1] See chapter ii. p. 28 ff.

dred" (Amos v. 3; see R. V.) So also, "It may be that the Lord of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph" (v. 15). The early existence of a succession of prophets is an illustration of the same principle. That they existed is a proof of the fact: the appeal to the fact shows that the theory of the history was formed. It is this aspect of the history which furnishes the key to that persistent expectation of good in the latter day which, in conjunction with the unshaken belief in the perpetuity of David's house, produced the Messianic idea, increasing ever in brightness as the night of the nation's history closed around them.[1]

But the Biblical theory of the history is declared by our modern historians to be a late conception, overlaid by late writers upon original documents which knew nothing of it. "How is it," asks Kuenen,[2] "that the picture of ancient Israel which we have thus recovered [*i.e.*, the picture which he thinks criticism warrants] differs so very widely from the current conception of its religious condition? The reason is not far to seek. The current conception is not derived from the special traits of which I have reminded you, but from the general reviews of the popular religion which the Israelitish historians lay before us—the introduction to the book of Judges (Judges ii. 6, iii. 6), and the retrospect of the fates of the kingdom of the ten tribes (2 Kings xvii. 7-23, 34-41)." Now if we turn to these reviews, which are thus set down as late, they are precisely in the tone of the prophets Amos and Hosea, the very earliest witnesses to whom we are allowed to appeal. What is the review of the period of the Judges? The children of Israel did evil against Jahaveh, though He had manifested special favour to them;

[1] See Note X. [2] National Religions, p. 69 f. Comp. above, p. 54.

He sold them into the hand of this enemy or that; they cried to Him in their trouble, He raised up a deliverer who saved them; the land had rest; again they sinned; and again the same cycle was repeated. This summary of the period might have been written by Hosea himself, or by Amos; and if there is any truth in what they say about prophets before them, any one from the days of Samuel might have written it. Precisely to the same effect is the summary of the history of the Kings in all essential points, only there is the deeper colouring of more heinous transgression, because mercy had been longer prolonged, and the threatening of heavier punishment, because all means of reformation had failed.

Now be it remembered the modern historians say that the same century that produced the writings of Amos and Hosea produced also—in an earlier part of it perhaps—the stories contained in the book of Judges, but that these summaries or reviews belong to a late time. I have proved that they need not be later than Amos or Hosea; in fact, that they exhibit the belief current in this century, the very time in which the narratives themselves are said to have been written. In other words, the narratives and the summaries may be of the same date and may have been written by the same persons.

I take it, then, that the views of Israel's past history given by the prophets of the eighth century were the views entertained by the nation generally in their time. These views, so far as they amount to a comprehensive conception of the history as a whole, agree exactly with the views of the Hebrew historians; and so far as reference is made to actual occurrences in the history, the prophets are at one with the historians. The great landmarks are clearly traceable: the deliverance from Egypt,

the guidance in the wilderness, the conquest of Canaan, the continuance of God-guided men in the nation, the pre-eminence of the house of David. As to the history subsequent to Moses, we are already at a time when it is regarded by the nation in that peculiar light which modern historians call late and unhistorical; and from the tone of the prophets Amos and Hosea, we may conclude that this view of the matter was common and of old standing.

We are not, however, left entirely to inferences from the words of these prophets. Though at present restricted in the use of other documents, we have one precious relic in the song of Deborah, which even modern critics generally allow must have come down from the age of the Judges. So far as its references bear upon the subject before us, they agree substantially with the view of the age we are considering. At the time the song was composed—the earlier time when the tribe of Dan was still on the seaboard (Judges v. 17)—the unity of all the tribes is a matter firmly fixed in the national consciousness. Israel is throughout one (see verses 2, 7-9, 11), though the powerful tribe of Judah is not mentioned; and God's gracious dealings with Israel in the past, especially the guidance in the wilderness, are forcibly referred to (verses 4, 5). One cannot read this remarkable song without coming to the conclusion that the rugged and unformed age of the Judges, as we are accustomed to regard it, was animated by a spirit that was far from being merely warlike; and that, under the rough exterior presented to us in the stories of the heroes, there were lofty conceptions of God's character and a feeling of consecration on the part of those who led the nation. Dr Davidson has said[1] that "if we possessed a few more

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 54.

utterances of the prophetic mind in this age, in place of the external histories of rude soldiers, we should probably be led to form a higher conception even of the religious condition of the people under the Judges." But is it *quantity* of written material that is decisive here? Is not this one example enough to show the religious consciousness of the nation in full energy—enough to connect the age of the Judges with the age of the prophets, and to explain the appeal of the latter to an antecedent chain of prophetic testimony? For, as Dr Davidson again says,[1] the prophets "were the efflorescence, season after season, of a tree whose roots always stood in the soil;" and "we cannot account for the appearance of a succession of such men otherwise than on the supposition that they arose out of a society in the main like-minded with themselves and fitted to give them birth." Bruce's warriors at Bannockburn may seem a miscellaneous concourse of half-civilised men fighting in a rough age because they loved fighting; but the one incident of these men kneeling to God before the battle gives evidence of a deeper spirit. So this song, the utterance of the animating spirit of those times of struggle, serves to explain even the rougher deeds of men, in whom the same spirit was also at work and found expression in its own way. The song of Deborah rises, at first sight, like a broken arch amid ruins, pointing we perceive not whither; but across a gulf of wreck and confusion another broken arch rises in the prophetic period, in line with the former and pointing backwards. Is it unreasonable to conclude that they form the remains of what was once a continuous structure? Have we not, at least, seen enough to convince us that it is arbitrary and unfair to limit the prophetic age,

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 164 f.

as is done, to a period comparatively recent; and that the "earlier prophets" are substantially in accord with the later in the account they give of their nation's history and religion?

Hitherto we have mostly confined ourselves to the earliest writing prophets, and endeavoured to determine the view they held of the history from the period of the exodus. When we inquire as to the times anterior to Moses, we find few references in these prophets to guide us. Such as they are, however, they agree with the books of the Pentateuch which refer to that period. When, for example, Amos in his threatening against Edom says (Amos i. 11), "Because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity," he proves that the story of Jacob and Esau was already current. The descent of the great northern tribes from Joseph is implied in the expression "the affliction of Joseph" (vi. 6); and the mention of the "high places of Isaac" (vii. 9) is another hint of the general acquaintance of the prophet's hearers with the patriarchal story. So when Hosea in a passing illustration says (Hosea xi. 8), "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim?" he not merely confirms, so far as his word may be taken, the account given in Genesis of the destruction of the cities of the plain, but shows that this tradition was already a national possession. And when the same prophet says (xii. 12), "Jacob fled into the country of Syria; and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept sheep," he does more than vouch for the belief in the single incidents mentioned; for these are inseparable items in a connected story, which is thus guaranteed as well known. Nay, the homiletic manner in which

the incidents are handled shows that by this time the patriarchal history was not merely a string of popular folk-lore, but was a subject of reflection and edification. For the point of the reference probably is not merely that God was the guardian of Israel in all dangers, but that Jacob, in whom the northern kingdom boasted, was but a poor fugitive shepherd serving for a wife, whereas the leader who brought the people from Egypt (mentioned in the next verse) was a prophet and shepherd of the people.[1] This, indeed, is the special value of the references of the prophets to the earlier history, that the story is shown to be not a mere legend *afterwards* worked over in a prophetic spirit, but that it was, as early as we can reach it, the groundwork of prophetic teaching.

Passing now from the prophets to the patriarchal stories in the book of Genesis, what are we to say of the history which they profess to give? These narratives, forming what is called the Jehovistic portion of the book of Genesis, are, as has been already mentioned,[2] admitted to belong to the first literary age, and indeed to the earlier part of it. Wellhausen in speaking[3] of them says: "The materials here are not mythical but national, and therefore more transparent, and in a certain sense more historical" (viz., than the primeval history contained in the earliest chapters of Genesis). Then he goes on to say: "It is true we attain to no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them arose in the Israelite people: this later age is here unconsciously projected, in its inner and its outward features, into hoar antiquity, and is reflected there like a glorified mirage." What he means is, that certain historical events of "this

[1] So Bredenkamp, Gesetz und Propheten, p. 26.

[2] Chap. iii. p. 53.

[3] Hist. of Israel, pp. 318, 319.

later age" are dressed up in this legendary form, or accounted for, or lie hid in these stories of times long bygone; and that it is the work of criticism to find out what are the national and "more historical" facts which underlie the legendary accounts. A good example is furnished by him[1] in a passage referring to the origin of these stories. It runs as follows:—

"Even the Jehovistic narratives about the patriarchs belong to the time when Israel had already become a powerful kingdom, Moab, Ammon, and Edom had been subjugated (Gen. xxvii. 29), and vigorous frontier wars were being carried on with the Syrians about Gilead (Gen. xxxi. 52). In Gen. xxvii. 40, allusion is made to the constantly repeated subjugations of Edom by Judah, alternating with successful revolts on the part of the former."

Unless the ordinary reader is prepared submissively to accept all that "scholars tell us," he will do well to turn up the passages here referred to, and form his own judgment as to whether Wellhausen can see farther into a millstone than himself. As to the acuteness of the critical faculty, which is able under such general statements to detect the definite historical events to which they are supposed to relate, it may be mentioned that another critical writer,[2] who is not behind Wellhausen in confidence in his own power to read true history out of such indications, places the formation of the legend of the Syrian origin of the patriarchs not earlier than the captivity, when the Hebrews had friendly relations with Mesopotamia. In regard to Wellhausen's view, however, it is surely an extraordinary freak of the legend-spinner to hide his reference to the carrying on of "vigorous frontier wars," under the story of the setting up of a cairn

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 464, footnote.

[2] Maurice Vernes, Résultats de l'Exégèse, p. 46 f.

to perpetuate peace. This whole line of argument forces us to suppose that these stories *originated* after the events supposed to be referred to. The question is, Was all the residuum of fact in these stories such events as the subjugation of Moab, Ammon, and Edom, and the border wars in Gilead? Did the nation know nothing of Jacob and his connection with Mesopotamia till the wars arose in Gilead, and had they no traditional belief that they were to be a paramount power till after Moab, Ammon, and Edom were subjugated? And then, as one event after another in their history took place, in the matter-of-fact days and the open light of the monarchy, did they turn every event into another trait in the picture of the patriarchs, till they elaborated out of common history that most extraordinary set of legends which the patriarchal story exhibits? And to crown all, when these events were still fresh in the memory of men, did Hosea and Amos and such men presently make use of these legends to point the moral of their prophecies? It is a most insufficient explanation of these stories to say that they give us "no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them arose." We want at least to know why the facts of history, patent and well known, were dressed up in this fashion; and if there is anything more in the stories than this reference to facts of history, we ought to be told what it is. How is it, in particular, that the patriarchal story, referring, according to this theory, to events quite isolated and even far apart in time and place, should hold so well together in a connected family history?

The modern critical historians are here ready with their theory that these genealogies of the patriarchs are the legendary accounts of the origin and relations of the

tribes, and that such stories "grew up" at various localities with which the name of one or another of the legendary forefathers was associated, each locality giving the version that most magnified the tribe in which it lay. "It would be quite possible," says Wellhausen,[1] "to present the composition and relative position of any given people at a given time in a similar way in the form of a genealogical early history;" and he adds[2] that "the genealogical form lends itself to the reception of every sort of materials." But the attempt to translate these family genealogies and movements into tribal formations and migrations,[3] even when made with all the freedom critics assume to themselves, is not by any means so successful as they would have us believe; and Wellhausen's remark might be met with the rejoinder that it would be quite possible to represent the genealogical history of any number of individuals in the form of accounts of the composition and relative position of peoples at any given time. The question is not what it would be easy to do, but why the thing was done just in this way. Wellhausen confesses the difficulty, though not its magnitude, in regard to what one would consider the most striking of all the patriarchs, Abraham himself. After telling us that "in the patriarchal legend the ethnographic element is *always* predominant," he says:[4] "Abraham alone is certainly not the name of a people like Isaac and Lot; he is somewhat difficult to interpret. That is not to say, that in such a connection as this we may regard him as a historical person; he might with more likelihood be regarded as a free creation of unconscious art. He is perhaps the youngest figure in the company, and it was probably at a

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 319.
[2] Ibid., p. 320.
[3] See Note XI.
[4] Hist. of Israel, p. 320.

comparatively late period that he was put before his son Isaac." We are not informed how late this period was; but we are told positively that at the time of Amos "he scarcely stood at the same stage as Isaac and Jacob."[1] All this, however, looks very like a breakdown of the theory by which these genealogies were to be explained. One would like to know how much of the story of Isaac, as a popular legend, would be comprehensible without a reference to that of Abraham; or whether it was adjusted at a "comparatively late period" after the "free creation" of Abraham, by unconscious art. And how can the one "locality" be accepted as explaining these stories about such different characters as Abraham and Isaac which yet are "so similar that they cannot possibly be held to be independent of each other"? Students of folk-lore are familiar with variants of a story cropping up at different places. Here we have not only variants at one place, Beersheba, in regard to Abraham and Isaac, but also the rise at different places of different stories, which are only comprehensible when all are brought together into a connected whole.

But let us consider what is implied in the assertion that these stories of the patriarchal times give us knowledge only "of the time when the stories arose." The whole question is, When did the stories arise? Suppose we grant for a moment that as written productions they first meet us in the ninth century, that does not imply necessarily that the happy thought occurred at that time

1 The only reason conceivable for this assertion is, that Amos mentions the high places of Isaac (vii. 9), but nowhere refers to Abraham. One might as well infer that Amos was not certain of his own parentage because he does not mention the name of his father. Both J. and E. (see Note VIII.) have the story of Abraham, and either or both of them must be earlier than Amos.

to the unknown J. or E. to set down in this romantic dress the history of his time, and of events that were fresh in memory or occurring before the eyes of his readers. If we are to get the time when the stories *arose*, then we must be told when they were first mooted, in what narrow circle they started, how long they were transmitted orally, and how they spread till they became household words in the eighth century, when Amos and Hosea refer to them as undoubted facts. Let us take Wellhausen's own canon in order to find out when the stories *arose*. This is what he says:[1] "This later age is here unconsciously projected, in its inner and its outward features, into hoar antiquity, and is reflected there like a glorified mirage." If it is indeed the case that outward as well as inner features are projected backward, then we must find a time when nomad life was the rule, and the land was thinly inhabited, so that the originator of these patriarchal stories may fulfil the conditions. For be it observed, these writers of a "later age" do not describe the patriarchs as bakers or dressers of sycamore-trees like themselves, as the Dutch artists used to paint the patriarchs dressed in knickerbockers. From the time of Solomon men had sat under their vine and their fig-tree; "To the tent!" was only the cry for battle; agriculture was common; the land well peopled long before the ninth century. Who was this J. or E. who could so accurately describe nomad life that had long passed away, and picture the land in a condition in which it could not have been in his own time? He is something more than a spinner of legend; he is a writer of romance. The accuracy of the picture which he draws is attested by modern life in the East, and it is well known how much

[1] Hist., p. 319.

more lifelike these stories have become since Palestine travel and research have thrown light upon them. And here, again, it might be well if German writers, instead of confining themselves to "underground" criticism, would go forth into the daylight of Eastern life and learn what it teaches. If a writer reflects his age, if a story bears the impress of the time when it arose, then we seek in vain for a time in which to place the *origin* of these stories, between the early time when nomad life was practicable in Palestine and these modern days of half-settled life. Wellhausen, in fact, is conscious of an incongruity in his position, though he does not confess that it renders the theory untenable. "It is remarkable," he says,[1] "that the heroes of Israelite legend show so little taste for war, and in this point of view they seem to be scarcely a true reflection of the character of the Israelites as known from their history."[2] And then, turning his back upon his own theory for the moment, he goes on to say that a people "incessantly driven into war not only dreamed of an eternal peace in the future, but also embodied the wishes of its heart in these peaceful forms of the golden age in the past." This is a nice illustration of *lucus a non lucendo* to begin with; and it is quite opposed to his own theory in the second place. Maurice Vernes is more consistent,[3] for he regards the accuracy of description of pastoral life in these narratives as another proof of the high culture of the post-exilian period, which could invest the life of the shepherd with such charm; and he hints, besides, that late writers at Jerusalem could have obtained models for their stories from the shepherds on the east of Jordan.

As to the contention that these stories grew up at

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 321. [2] See Note XII. [3] Résultats, &c., p. 197.

various localities, it may be freely conceded that stories generally do come from the places at which the events which they relate occurred. It may also be admitted that traditions are coloured to some extent by the age in which they find literary expression. But this applies to any written history—even to those that are written in this nineteenth century. All this, however, is a very different thing from saying that the old traditions of Israel relating to the patriarchal age rest on no foundation of fact in that age, and that they have no positive value beyond the evidence they give of the tendencies of the age in which they first find literary expression. Even if these traditions were first committed to writing in the ninth century—even if they rested on no pre-existing writings,—they were not inventions of the time, but the accepted beliefs of the nation before they could be put forth as matters of common acceptance; and the essential problem before us is to explain how the national beliefs took just this form.

I believe that practically the only answer which modern writers give to this question is, that all nations have delighted in tracing back their history and national institutions to great ancestors, who are but mythical personages, and that Israel has only done the same. It may be freely admitted that we find historical peoples carrying back their history and their genealogy to ancestors lying beyond the range of historic certainty. But sober historians do not on that account reject these legends as of no historic value, or dismiss them as merely the reflections of the times in which they are first committed to writing; it is their part to seek to interpret them, and to discover the earlier historic facts which lie at their foundation. And we cannot object to the application of a

similar criticism to the earlier traditions of Israel, nor think it strange if the facts underlying them turn out in certain respects to be something different from the literal sense of the forms in which they are embodied. It is one thing, for example, to say that a pious veneration or a simple-minded tradition invested with a nimbus of greatness the formative characters of its early history, and quite another thing to say that these characters were formed out of late events by a process of legend-spinning. It is one thing to seek to find out the bare historical events of the lives of Wallace and Bruce; it would be quite another thing to make these heroes the legendary outgrowth of the events that brought about the union of the kingdoms of Scotland and England. In regard, however, to these traditions, two points have to be borne in mind, which mark a contrast between Israelite and Gentile legends.

(1.) The so-called legendary characters are very unlike the legendary characters of pagan myth. There is nothing hazy or indistinct or semi-divine about them. In their doings we see alike the workings of human frailty, the nicest idiosyncrasies, the most strongly marked individuality; there is no effort made to conceal their faults or to set one on a higher pedestal than his neighbour. The characters of Abraham and Isaac, for example, the legends regarding whom are referred to the same localities, and are said to rest on identical facts, are as dissimilar as any two characters in Scripture. And all movements and activities of these early personalities are set in such a framework of time and place, that if the characters are not drawn from the life, they are the work of a romancer, not of a weaver of fairy tales and legends. Stade himself has said[1] that to ordinary Christians of the

[1] Geschichte, vol. i. p. 4.

present day, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Saul, David, and Solomon, Samuel and Elijah, are better known than the heroes of their own history, and that for the mass of our people the Biblical history *is* history in general. The reason why these characters make this strong impression on the popular mind is not so much that they are heroes of sacred history, as because their individuality is so strongly marked. The most ordinary reader of the Bible never confounds one of the patriarchs with another, nor thinks of mixing up the deeds of one with the doings of another. It is very different with the heroes of pagan mythology, where, in the dim shadow of a time attempted to be recalled, the figures resemble one another, perform the same feats, and, as we attempt to grasp their characters, fade away into unsubstantial phantoms. If these early figures of Israelite history are the creations of art, it is art of the highest kind; and in any case, it is clear that the legends—if legends they are—are cast in a better mould, and have been preserved in the caskets of a purer national memory.

(2.) Another striking difference is this: Pagan nations trace back their origin and the origin of their institutions to some great ancestor who embodies in himself all the potentialities of his race. The farther back they can place him, the greater dignity is conferred upon the race; the higher the antiquity, the more illustrious the history. Now in the case of Israel we find a series of such ancestors and a succession of men to whom the moulding of the nation's life is attributed. To be parallel with pagan legend, the Israelite tradition ought to ascribe all to Abraham, or even to Heber, the father of the race of the Hebrews. But though to Abraham is traced in a special manner the beginnings of the religion and the

ancestry of the race, the story of Jacob-Israel, which is quite different in its cast, is as important a link in the chain of the tradition.[1] And so, though Moses appears as the founder of nationality in a special sense, his greatness is not enhanced either by making the antecedent history a blank, void of all knowledge of religion, or by leaving nothing to be done by his successors. The period of Samuel comes again as a well-marked crisis in the history; and the reigns of David and Solomon have their distinct features as steps in the national development. All this is quite different from the legendary stuff out of which the earlier histories of pagan nations have to be expiscated, and it is simply impossible to make them the inventions of a myth-spinning imagination. The only conclusion we can come to in view of such facts, if we are to attempt to construct Israel's history from the materials before us and not from our own notions, is that these names or characters do represent distinct phases in the growth of the nation, and that it was because they possessed strongly marked characteristics that they have been depicted with such striking individuality. It is impossible to explain the national belief in these epochs which we find at the clear historical period of the eighth century, without assuming that something characteristic and positive, as matter of fact, attached to each of them, and made its impress on the nation's heart and was preserved in the national memory.

There is a temptation, which is very seductive, to adopt what may be called a nebular hypothesis of early history. Having fixed upon what we consider the earliest historical period, we are apt to suppose that the succession of the race before that period was maintained by existences

[1] König, Hauptprobleme der altisraelitischen Religionsgeschichte, p. 19.

of a nebular, unformed, half-human character, forgetting that it is only the distance of our standpoint that makes the characters indistinct. Could we get near enough to the age in which Abraham is placed by the Biblical writers, we should discover that it was an age of human beings of parts and passions like ourselves, for that matter; and at all events, of individuals no doubt very much such as these writers depict. Thoreau says in one place:[1] "On beholding a picture of a New England village as it then appeared [viz., in the time of the Indian wars], with a fair open prospect, and a light on trees and river as if it were broad noon, we find we had not thought the sun shone in those days, or that men lived in broad daylight then." Similarly Carlyle, in regard to the 'Chronicle of Jocelin,'[2] exclaims: "Behold, therefore, this England of the year 1200 was no chimerical vacuity or dreamland, peopled with mere vaporous Fantasms, . . . but a green solid place, that grew corn and several other things. The sun shone on it; the vicissitude of seasons and human fortunes. . . . In wondrous Dualism, then as now, lived nations of breathing men; alternating, in all ways, between Light and Dark; between joy and sorrow, between rest and toil — between hope, hope reaching high as Heaven, and fear deep as very Hell." In this matter all depends upon the nearness of the point of view, and modern writers vary in the length of their vision, for some would make not only the patriarchs, but Moses and Joshua, or even David and his contemporaries, little more than "vaporous Fantasms." The question is, whether at this late time we are in possession of materials that enable us to bridge the gulf of so many centuries, and take our

[1] Walk to Wachusett, quoted in 'Life' by H. A. Page, p. 38.

[2] Past and Present, Book II. chap. i.

stand in broad daylight, or, at all events, in a light sufficiently bright to enable us to distinguish individuals in the great mass of antiquity. It is not in our present plan to refer to the archæological discoveries of the present century. It may merely be mentioned in passing that those tablets of Tell-el-Amarna, for example, cause to start into life a period that has hitherto been regarded by many as very nebulous, and set us down on the solid soil of Palestine a century before the exodus, among men with very ordinary occupations and very human feelings; and the monuments of Egypt and Assyria carry us back in a very striking way to those ages, and bring them within the sphere of historical knowledge.[1] Apart from these, however, does not this age of the first writing prophets at once enable us to take up firm standing-ground at *that* period at least, and put us face to face with men who have surely some right to be heard in regard to their nation's history? Although modern historians will assert that this is the earliest writing age (without, however, having proved it), it is evident that it was not an age at which Israel, as a nation, was waking up out of the unconsciousness of antecedent dreamland, and rubbing its eyes and asking whence it came. It has something very definite and positive to say for itself. Wellhausen says that the stories of the patriarchs differ from the traditions in regard to earlier times; and so they do. The question is, whether they are the creations of the national imagination, as he says, or the treasured traditions of the national memory. And when from the writing prophets we can, by the aid of the song of Deborah, not to mention other compositions, pass to firm historical ground in the time of the Judges, it does not seem, after all, to be such an

[1] See Note XIII.

extravagant thing to believe that individuals named Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were positive historical characters, whose existence was stamped indelibly on the popular memory. Some events need no books to preserve them; they are written on the tablets of thousands of hearts, and transmitted with their life-blood to children's children. Suppose, for illustration, that we find public speakers in Scotland in this century appealing to the deeds of Wallace and Bruce, and referring to the battle of Bannockburn, in order to arouse national shame or national enthusiasm, and that the references are not challenged, but set forth in the confident and assured tone of Hosea and Amos, this would surely be convincing proof that these matters were part of the nation's historical possession. Yet if you ask nine out of every ten Scotsmen for a proof of the existence of Wallace and Bruce, or of the occurrence of the battle of Bannockburn, they will probably be at a loss to give it. You could easily show that "Bruce's Address" was written by Burns centuries after the time at which the battle is placed, and he had no ancient documents to go upon; and from the time in which Burns lived—the time of our great wars—you might easily prove that the song was written for a purpose, to stimulate patriotism and magnify our arms; and you could easily find underlying the character of Bruce a contemporary of the poet distinguished in battle. And then as for old Barbour's Chronicle, we find it so full of discrepancies, and so coloured by superstitious beliefs, that it may be rejected as an untrustworthy document, or set down to a late time—the work of an imitator of the old language of the chroniclers, who projected himself into the distant past. Modern critical rewriting of history, which is often a mere parody of history, is a trick

as easily learned as literary parody, and it is often as tiresome. Yet the battle of Bannockburn took place; and the best proof of the fact is, that the whole nation believes it, and has been and is at this moment sensibly affected in its very vitals by the recollection. So the great events of Israel's history, the turning-points, the points determinative of the whole life and history, are attested by the nation at the earliest time at which we are enabled to look for materials on which an opinion can be based. No reason can be given for the invention of them just at this time, or for the significance which the prophets assign to them. It may be that a fond memory invested with a halo of glory the great fathers of the race; it may also be that a simple piety saw wonders where a modern age would see none. Yet the individuality of the characters is not destroyed, nor are the sequence of events and the delineations of character shown to be the work of a fitful and unbridled imagination.

CHAPTER VI.

THE KEY OF THE CRITICAL POSITION.

The preceding inquiry has given us so far a general confirmation of the Biblical view, and the conclusion has been reached by taking undisputed documents in their natural sense—But since the modern view claims to rest on a critical examination of the documents, we have to consider what the critical sifting amounts to—Stade's statement of the process that has taken place in the canonisation of books—The historical books; how modified in accordance with later views—Critical appeal to contemporary prophetic writings as a check on the historical—Prophetical books, however, have also to be critically sifted: Stade's account of the case—Examples of the critical adjustment of Amos and Hosea—Striking out, allowing for unhistorical ideas—Want of fixed objective standard of appeal—The first principle of criticism, how stated and how misapplied—The whole controversy, however, turns round the question as to whether the prophets were reformers or originators—Two points eliminated as not in dispute—Still there are three points to be proved before the critical position can be adopted.

"I GREET you at the beginning of a great career, which yet must have had a long foreground somewhere for such a start." With these words Emerson extended to Walt Whitman a welcome into the literary world; and in a similar way we must greet the so-called first literary age of Israel. By three distinct lines of inquiry we have examined this age, and from a literary, a religious, and a historical point of view, we conclude that it must

have had "a long foreground somewhere for such a start." We have confined ourselves to such books or portions of books as are placed in this period, and we have found that by a safe inference they lead us back to an anterior time and an antecedent condition of things which, substantially, are those represented in the books which profess to give us a record of those times. The testimony of the writing prophets, Hosea and Amos, to the history, is particularly weighty. When they refer to the past history of the nation, they do so as to a matter well known; and when they give a particular representation of the history, they leave no room for doubt that the consciousness of their contemporaries was with them. Now what does this imply? It implies that the facts and ideas were so wrought into the national mind that there was no need to prove or substantiate them, no thought of gainsaying them. And applying the argument we have employed in regard to the literary and religious features of the books, we conclude that a scheme of history like this was not a sudden product, foisted upon their generation by two individuals. Before it could become, as it clearly had become, the settled belief of the whole nation in any one century, there must have been not merely a set of facts on which it was based, but a process of reflection upon them, a holding of them up by some person or persons before the nation's eyes, or a provision of some kind for keeping them alive in the nation's remembrance. Again, therefore, we are driven back to an antecedent time, during which these traditions took concrete shape, and became, not only recollections of events, but interpretations of them in a religious historical sense. From every point of view, therefore, it appears that the century we

are considering is not merely, or not mainly, the starting-point of a new development, but that, preceding it, there is implied a very considerable stage of culture and a long process of religious reflection and education. All this, of course, is not sufficient to establish the existence or composition of the disputed books at the early period to which they relate. It is enough, however, to show that writings of a historical and religious kind, such as they are, might quite well have been composed before what has been provisionally called the first literary age. Moreover, the testimony afforded by Hosea and Amos, and by writings of their century, amounting, as we contend, to the testimony of the nation itself, will be regarded, by some minds at least, as stronger testimony than that of written compositions, and a sufficient guarantee that the disputed books, which profess to relate the earlier national history, at whatever time they may have been written, rest upon and are in accordance with the same tradition, which we find to be a national possession at the period of the undisputed compositions.

So far as we have gone, then, we seem to get a general confirmation of the Biblical theory. And the conclusion at which we have arrived, whatever may be its value, has not been based upon any of the writings that are said to be late and unhistorical, nor has any attempt been made to strain words beyond their natural sense, or to assume anything that ordinary experience and common-sense do not warrant. According to the modern critical historians, however, the matter is not by any means so simple as this; for the conclusion to which they come, based, as it is claimed, on the same documents critically examined, is very different, as has already been indicated. We must now, therefore, consider somewhat more closely what this

critical sifting of the documents amounts to, and on what principles it is carried out, so as to discover, if possible, what residuum of testimony remains to us as authoritative and trustworthy.

A great part of Wellhausen's History of Israel is devoted to what he terms "History of Tradition," in which he goes over the historical books in detail, pointing out how later views have been superimposed on earlier accounts, or made to explain or even originate earlier alleged events. Stade, near the beginning of his history, lays down in a preliminary way, and more explicitly, the grounds for this critical sifting. Canonical writings, he says,[1] are usually affected in only too sensible a manner by the process of canonisation. With every act of canonisation there is inseparably connected a thorough revisal and working over—a final redaction, in fact, of the work canonised. The reason for this is, that a definite final development of thought is only reached after varied mental movement; and those standing at the end of a chain of development and looking back at the process by which it has been reached, assuming that the final form is alone right, will find blanks and contradictions in the writings that have been composed in the course of this development. The final redaction will seek to fill up the blanks and to smooth down the contradictions; and this gives rise to insertions, omissions, and patching up of the original. Even after canonisation has taken place, writings are exposed to defacement in the interest of some party or tendency which has gained the upper hand and possesses the guardianship of the books.

This working over of the materials of tradition, Stade

[1] Geschichte, p. 14 f. I give the substance of the passage instead of a literal translation.

proceeds, raises special difficulties, inasmuch as the whole material is subjected to a repeated systematic revision to adapt it to the ideas of each successive period at which revision takes place; and though among other peoples the historical traditions have also been remoulded to suit later ideas, nowhere is the process more energetically carried out than where religious interests come into play; for then it is not merely a case of touching up individual details, but a radical refashioning of the whole material of tradition in harmony with the theological system prevailing at the time.

He then goes on to specify the occasions on which the traditions of Israel were thus revised, and the interests in which they were refashioned. The historical matter, he says, underwent three different revisions. (1.) In the year 621 B.C. was discovered a law-book (the Code of Deuteronomy), which became authoritative, and was made the basis of a reform of worship. This code, which professes to come from Moses, has for its chief requirement that "the place which God should choose" on the west side of the Jordan—viz., Jerusalem—was to be the only authorised seat of sacrificial worship. When once this code had gained recognition and ascendancy, there ensued a process—beginning in the end of the reign of Josiah and lasting on till the first part of the exile—of retouching and working over the whole traditional material, in accordance with what had now become standard and accepted views. For, seeing that all the leaders of the nation up to the year 621 had systematically (and naturally) worshipped contrary to the requirements of the Deuteronomic Code, these men, from the time of David and Solomon onwards, must have seemed, in the eyes of a person brought up under the new ideas, nothing better than half heathen. But this was repugnant to his

religious experience, and so the traditional matter was revised under the ruling ideas: that Israel from the time of Moses had been a sacred community, that Moses was succeeded by Joshua, Joshua by the Judges, and that Saul's reign was a declension from the divinely appointed organisation of the people. (2.) At a later time the law-book found in 621 was joined with other writings, and the whole, through Ezra's labours, made the law-book of the community. The most recent of the works embraced in this collection was the so-called Priestly Code, which gives another and more developed view of the history of Israel; and in accordance with this, again, the earlier history was revised, so as to agree with the conditions of this Code. For as a fully developed ritual, claiming to be of Mosaic origin, was now in force, it was necessary to represent ancient Israel as living also under a similar organisation, divided into twelve tribes, with not only a sacred tribe of Levi, but a family of Aaron with special privileges. And whereas the Deuteronomic law had been content to date the unity of worship from the time of Solomon's Temple, the Priestly Code dated it back to the wilderness, and provided the people with a tabernacle. (3.) Finally, the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles were composed about the year 300 B.C., with the view of exhibiting the whole ancient history in the light of the post-exilian Judaism, and in accordance with the circumstances which arose on the basis of the Priestly Code.

These later revisions of the traditional material, it is to be observed, did not, on the theory, obliterate the older traditions, which are still capable of being discovered by patient criticism. In regard to the last revision, Wellhausen says it is a fortunate matter that "Chronicles did not succeed in superseding the historical books upon which

it was founded; the older and the newer version have been preserved together." [1] But it is different with the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings. Here "the whole area of tradition has finally been uniformly covered with an alluvial deposit, by which the configuration of the surface has been determined." [2] It is the work of criticism to remove this deposit, to get below it to the earlier form of the tradition, and to assign the various deposits to the dates at which they were deposited. In this process, we are told, "it may stand as a general principle that the nearer history is to its origin, the more profane it is." [3] "What is usually given out as the peculiar theocratic element in the history of Israel, is the element which has been introduced by the redaction. . . . This pedantic supranaturalism—'sacred history,' according to the approved recipe—is not to be found in the original accounts. In these Israel is a people just like other people; nor is even his relationship to Jehovah otherwise conceived of than is, for example, that of Moab to Chemosh." [4]

It will now appear why at the outset, to avoid controversy, we left out of account certain portions of the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, since these, it is claimed, have undergone a Deuteronomistic revision,[5] and also those parts of the Pentateuch other than the patriarchal stories of the Jehovist, because the Pentateuch is strongly overlaid with additions in the spirit of the Priestly Code. But the question here arises, Is it possible, and if so, by what means, to separate earlier from late, and to de-

[1] Hist., p. 228. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid., p. 245. [4] Ibid., p. 235.

[5] The revision in the spirit of Deuteronomy is usually designated the Deuteronomist, in distinction from the Deuteronomer, or author of the writing found in the Temple.

termine the time at which the later supervened upon the earlier parts in those writings that profess to be history? To this Stade, and those of his way of thinking, answer in effect that the revisers or redactors were not so skilful as to entirely conceal what they worked upon; that sometimes political events enable us to determine at least whether a piece belongs to the northern or southern kingdom, to pre-exilian or post-exilian[1] times, and so forth. But Stade says very truly[2] that if we are to fix the rise of any disputed writing, we must have a firm point by which to fix it; and the prophetic movement, he adds, furnishes a number of such fixed points. It will be found, in fact, that the whole theory of the rise of the Deuteronomic and Priestly Codes at the periods to which they are respectively assigned, appeals for support in the last resource to the prophetic writings; and so indeed does the whole theory of the development of the history. For in the prophetical writings we have contemporary documents, which give us a direct knowledge of the times to which they belong. They enable us, therefore, to control the so-called historical compositions, and to say what is pre-prophetic and what prophetic, since the whole religious history was powerfully modified by prophetic influence.

Leaving out of view for the present the aids furnished by political events and considerations of general development, we seem, on the admission of the critical writers, to have obtained, in the writings of contemporary prophets, a sure standard by which to estimate the statements of the historical books, and to determine generally the course of the historical development; and so, in the preceding chapters, we have appealed with confidence to the books

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 13. [2] Geschichte, i. p. 19.

of Hosea and Amos. Another complication of the matter, however, occurs here; for this fixed standard, it appears, is only to be accepted with reservation. The prophetical writings also, in becoming "canonical," have passed through vicissitudes similar to those of the historical books. This is what Stade has to say on the subject:[1]—

"We must, indeed, in using the prophetical literature, always keep before us the fact that the judgments found therein regarding historical persons and circumstances are passed from a party point of view. Since, however, we are able to survey the prophetic activity as a movement running in a straight line, and fully completed, the points of view are sufficiently known to us from which the treatment of the history was regarded by the prophets, and we are thus in a position to control and correct their judgments. Moreover, it is to be noted that a writer who does not set himself, *ex professo*, to write history according to definite guiding principles, but only touches on historical matters by the way in the unfolding of his thoughts, will never allow his ideas to have such a moulding influence on the historical material as a historian who proceeds upon such principles. He will probably view persons and circumstances at an oblique visual angle, and, just for that reason, will not judge correctly. He will, however, hardly go so far as to draw generally the conclusions from his own ideas, and consequently will communicate sufficiently accurate details, by which we can correct those that are inaccurate.

"In the employment of the prophetical literature there is still a second point to be well noted, which is generally overlooked. The development of prophecy, whose literary products lie before us in the Old Testament, is only development in one straight line. But the development of human thought [as explained in connection with the historical writings] is not in the habit of moving in this one-sided way. Then we have besides, in the prophetical writings of the Old Testament, sufficient indications pointing to the conclusion that the development of the Old Testament prophecy was once a much richer and more manifold thing. The false prophets who were combated by the authors of the prophetical writings that have

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[1] Geschichte, i. p. 80 ff.

come down to us, are representatives of divergent prophetical tendencies. They also wrote prophetical works. It is self-evident, however, that only the works of such prophets have been handed down as lie in the direction of the prophetic ideas which gained the victory and came to be universally received. One of the things that mainly determined this result was the circumstance whether or not the prophecies of a prophet had been fulfilled. From those prophets, who, in opposition to Jeremiah, prophesied the victory of the Judæan state over Babylon, not a single work, as a matter of course, has come down to us. When, however, it was a question of receiving or not receiving a prophetic piece into the canon, it was not always so simple a matter for a work to prove that it belonged to a certain mode of thought; and accordingly, just when the collection of the writings of the prophets was made, there must have taken place a very special and thorough overworking of the material handed down, with regard to the points of view explained already [in connection with the canonisation of historical writings], and by means of the expedients already described."

We cannot enter into all the questions here raised as to what happened to books in the process of canonisation. It is quite apparent that what is assumed to have taken place is something very different from the events incident in the ordinary transmission of ancient books. These sweeping assertions, however, are of no value unless supported by positive proof; and it could be shown that the graver portion of them is entirely destitute of historical foundation.[1] The struggle between opposing tendencies, so far as it did take place, lies before us quite patent in the Biblical writings; nor is there the shadow of proof that any attempt was made in these writings to suppress one side of it; and the genuineness of the writings before us is not to be settled by such *a priori* canons. But the thoughtful reader will ask at this point, Where now is the fixed standard of appeal? If prophetical writers wrote under a bias, which must be allowed for and

[1] See König's Hauptprobleme, pp. 12 ff., and his Falsche Extreme, p. 3.

corrected; if their writings have not come down to us in their original form, and require to be critically adjusted; or if the prophets even held erroneous views in regard to the national history, which have to be rectified,—who holds the infallible standard for determining all the grave and difficult questions which then arise? The answer will perhaps appear as we now proceed to observe the application of the critical canons to the two books of Hosea and Amos on which we have hitherto relied. We have already seen[1] that, by both these prophets, a certain pre-eminence is given to the house of David and the southern kingdom of Judah. The modern theory, however, maintains that it was at a much later time that this pre-eminence was assigned to Judah, and that in the early prophetic period the balance of power lay in the northern kingdom. Accordingly, Stade proceeds to strike out of Amos as "insertions" certain expressions (among others[2]) that are at variance with his theory. The most important in this connection are the two verses 4 and 5 of chapter ii., containing the prophet's denunciation of the sin of Judah, "because they have despised the law of the Lord, and not kept His commandments." It may suit Stade and others to regard this as an "insertion," but it is important to observe that if the verses are omitted, there would be a singular incompleteness of the whole passage, chapters i., ii., in which Amos makes a survey of the neighbouring nations on every side, ending with Israel, to which he directly addressed his words. The omission altogether of Judah from the

[1] Chap. v. p. 111.

[2] Stade, Geschichte, i. p. 571, footnote. Besides the passage, ii. 4, 5, considered in the text, the other portions rejected by Stade are, iv. 13 (partly), v. 8 f., ix. 6. Reference will be made to these in another place.

survey, therefore, would be unaccountable on the mere ground of literary form, to say nothing further in the meantime of the substance. The book of Hosea fares no better at the hands of the critics. It is part of their theory that those passages in the historical books which express disapproval of the monarchy, as inconsistent with the divinely organised theocracy, are due to the Deuteronomistic revision. Since, therefore, Hosea (more than a century before the discovery of the Deuteronomic Code) is found to speak in that sense, the passages must be removed. Stade says:[1] "Since this prophet's expectations of the future, owing to his peculiar representation of the monarchy, differed in cardinal points from the type of view of the future that came to prevail with Isaiah, an attempt has been made at a later time to get over the difficulty by the insertion of the missing details." Consequently we are told to strike out i. 7, ii. 1-3, which break the connection and disturb the order of thought; and also in iii. 5 we are to omit at least the words "and David their king," as well as iv. 15, viii. 14, which refer to Judah.[2] Wellhausen also perceives the difficulties that emerge here, and has a similar method of laying them.

[1] Geschichte, i. p. 577, footnote.

[2] The passages in question are these:—

Hosea i. 7: "But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen."

ii. 1-3 (viz., in A. V. i. 10 f.): "Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered: and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God. Then shall the children of Judah and the children of Israel be gathered together, and appoint themselves one head, and they shall come up out of the land: for great shall be the day of Jezreel. Say unto your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah."

iii. 5: "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the

He confesses that Hosea "appears to have regarded the kingdom as such as an evil; in more than one expression he makes it the antithesis of the rule of Jehovah."[1] And having given what he considers the explanation of this, he says in a footnote: "He even speaks with favour of David and the kingdom of Judah, but I consider all such references in Hosea (as well as in Amos) to be interpolations. In i. 7 there is a reference to the deliverance of Jerusalem under Hezekiah."

The process of "striking out," however, does not meet the whole difficulty. The teaching of Hosea and Amos on important points is so ingrained in the whole books that it cannot be evaded. Accordingly, another line of explanation has to be followed. Stade says:[2] "Hosea is the first who conceives the whole of the past from the point of view of a declension (*Abfall*), and his opinion in regard to the monarchy is but a part of this general view. And just as his ideas of the intercourse of Israel with foreign nations had, along with other things, a material influence on the later Jewish ideas regarding the heathen, so also his use of the argument from history, in order to prove to the people their deviation from the requirements of Jehovah and their declension, prepared the way for the unhistorical view that came to be taken of the past, and the treatment of it in the light of later religious conceptions. That view, which took Israel's history as a sacred history under a process

Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter day."

iv. 15: "Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend."

viii. 14: "For Israel hath forgotten his Maker, and buildeth temples; and Judah hath multiplied fenced cities."

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 417.

[2] Geschichte, i. p. 582.

of throwing a light of its own on the actual circumstances, did not indeed take its beginning from him, but received from him its strongest impulse." [1]

The position in which we are now placed is this. The modern historians have refused to call the books of the Pentateuch as evidence; they have eliminated those "summaries" of the history which are overlaid on the historical books; they triumphantly appeal to contemporary witnesses; and we have accepted them. And then, when their own witnesses step into the box, and are expected to bless the modern theory, they curse it altogether. And this by no forced cross-examination on the part of those who were to be confuted by them, but by spontaneous straightforward statements; and forthwith those who called them proceed to tell us that the evidence is to be taken with reservation. For later additions have been made to the testimony, and these must be removed before we can get the true statement of the case. Nay, these prophets themselves, even when we get at their own words, are not to be relied on for matters of fact when they tell us that other teachers taught the same truth before them, nor for their statements of history when they declare that their nation had been taught a better religion and had declined from it. The question again recurs, Where now is the fixed point and firm standard by which we are to reach the truth? The historical books are to be corrected by the aid of the prophetical; but where is the standard for correcting the

[1] Stade is not by any means alone in discrediting the views of the prophets. Smend, in an article in 'Studien und Kritiken' for 1876 on the stage of development in the Israelite religion presupposed by the prophets of the eighth century, speaks in a similar strain. He is criticised by König, Offenbarungsbegriff, vol. i. p. 23 f.

prophetical books? On what authority are these "insertions" to be removed; by what guide are we to adjust the prophetic misapprehensions? The only "fixed" thing perceivable is the theory itself; the only standard is "strike out" or "I consider." For the rest, what may be called by admirers a delicate process of criticism may appear to others uncommonly like a piece of literary thimblerigging. You come upon the critic suddenly when he professes to be engaged in one of those delicate processes of criticism, and you find him slipping his subjective scale up his sleeve. The passages which disturb a pet theory are declared to disturb the connection. We have, in fact, *no* contemporary reliable documents till the critic has adjusted them; and the theory ultimately is appealed to in confirmation of itself.

Looking to the assumptions made by Stade as to what has happened to historical and prophetical books before and during canonisation, the difficulty of getting beneath the documents to the precise facts of the history will appear to most minds stupendous; and looking to the absence of fixity in the standard of judgment, one cannot help wondering at, if not admiring, the confidence with which critics set to work on the task. One,[1] for example, tells us that "it is not needful in starting to lay down any fixed rules of procedure. The ordinary laws of evidence and good sense must be our guides. And these we must apply to the Bible just as we should do to any other ancient book. That is the only principle we have to lay down. And it is plainly a just principle." So undoubtedly it is, if only all were agreed as to what "the ordinary laws of evidence and good sense" amount

[1] Robertson Smith, the Old Testament in the Jewish Church, Lect. i. p. 25.

to. Another[1] of a more daring temperament, after giving his own sketch of a part of the history, which differs *toto cælo* from that of the Biblical books, says, "The sketch which we have given can be extracted from our sources without too much trouble. In order to disengage the encumbrances (*surcharges*) which the theological point of view of the redactor has introduced into them, all that is wanted (*il suffit*) is a little practice and some decision." Some! Critics, indeed, profess to proceed upon a principle which, properly taken, is the basis of historical inquiry—viz., "that every book bears the stamp of the time and circumstances in which it was produced."[2] But in the exercise of this principle many of them set to work after the manner of a schoolboy, who, finding that his new knife can cut a stick, employs it in barking fruit-trees and hacking furniture. In order to determine an author's time, expressions will be seized upon which might refer to any time; or, his time being determined, his position in it and even his relation to it will be circumscribed by our meagre knowledge of what the time and circumstances were. The most lofty poetry may be degraded into the dullest prose; critics, "unable to follow prophecy in its flight, clip its wings;"[3] and because, forsooth, a prophet is to be regarded as speaking to his own age, he must not be allowed to see anything beyond it. Properly speaking, the first principle of criticism is that every book bears the stamp of the man that produced it; and it is from the book that we are to know the man. It is not

[1] Maurice Vernes, Résultats, p. 26.

[2] Old Testament in Jewish Church, Lect. i. p. 23.

[3] So Delitzsch speaks of men of the type of Grotius, a type not by any means extinct.—Comm. on Isaiah, last Eng. ed., vol. i. p. 41.

legitimate to determine beforehand both his time and his circumstances, and then to interpret the whole book in the light of the position we have assigned to the writer. It is no doubt true that every man belongs to his age, and is to a certain extent a product of it. But are there not men who mould their age? Are there not men in advance of their age? Are not the *circumstances* under which an author writes partly the influences of a past time, and partly also the adumbrations of a coming time? In a word, to tie a writer down to the circumstances and surroundings of his day is utterly unscientific and opposed to experience. To treat Hebrew prophets, of all men, in this way, is simply to lay down an insurmountable barrier to our understanding them.

Of the critical pretension to be able to determine dates of passages by occult references, we have just seen an example in Wellhausen's confident assertion that Hosea i. 7 must be as late as the time of Hezekiah. It is an example as good as many of those with which his pages are thickly strewn. Different readers will estimate differently the ability which they display. I confess that many of them do not, to my mind, exhibit even "such a display of ingenuity as makes people clap their hands and cry *well done!* but does not seriously persuade them."[1] If they were merely the occasional coruscations of the critical wit, serving to enliven the dull pages, they might be borne with. But they are, in fact, advanced with a gravity which at times makes the reader doubt his own sanity, and given forth as the results of critical science, out of which a new history is to be constructed.

We come back, however, to the essential point. The

[1] Matthew Arnold, God and the Bible, chap. v. § 1. The whole section is well worth reading in our connection.

key of the position is the view that is taken of the teaching of the prophets; and at this point the two theories are quite opposed. The Biblical theory represents the prophets as continuators, reformers, recalling their people to a standard of religion from which they had fallen. The modern critical historians place a wide gulf between the pre-prophetic and the prophetic religion, the general position being that the pre-prophetic religion of Israel differed little, if in anything, from the religion of the nations who lived round about Israel. "The religion of David and Solomon," says Renan,[1] "did not differ appreciably from that of the neighbouring peoples of Palestine." Jahaveh, as others put it, was to the Israelites very much what Chemosh and Moloch were to the Moabites and Ammonites.[2] So far from appearing among the Canaanites with distinctive religious beliefs and customs, they resembled them in all essential points, settled quietly among them in many or in most cases, and finding their ideas conform to their own, adopted their sacred places, attaching to them stories of their own tribal heroes, but observing the religious customs and worship of their neighbours.

This is what Stade says:[3]—

"That the religion of Israel, from being a nature religion, became a religion of the spirit; that such a religion arose in the ancient world is, in the first place, the merit of the prophetic movement, and in the second place, the result of the political fortunes of the people. The prophetic movement had to wage violent conflicts with the popular religion."

And Wellhausen,[4] after remarking that the prophets,

[1] Pref. to second vol. of Histoire d'Israel, p. ii.
[2] Stade, Geschichte, i. p. 429.
[3] Ibid., p. 9.
[4] Hist. of Israel, p. 461.

who first appeared as a novel phenomenon some time before the beginning of the Philistine war, had in the interval (ending with Ahab) become so naturalised that they had a recognised and essential place in connection with the religion of Jehovah, goes on to say:—

"First-rate importance on the whole cannot be claimed for the Nebiim, but occasionally there arose amongst them a man in whom the spirit which was cultivated within their circles may be said to have risen to the explosive pitch;" and "the prototype of this class of exceptional prophets, whom we not unjustly have been accustomed to regard as the true, is Elijah of Thisbe, the contemporary of Ahab. To him first," Wellhausen proceeds,[1] "was it revealed that we have not, in the various departments of nature, a variety of forces worthy of our worship, but that there exists over all but one Holy One and one Mighty One, who reveals Himself not in nature, but in law and righteousness in the world of man."

Passing on to Amos, we are told[2]—

"Amos was the founder and the purest type of a new phase of prophecy. The impending conflict of Asshur with Jehovah and Israel, the ultimate downfall of Israel, is its theme."

Again:[3]—

"The canonical prophets, the series of whom begins with Amos, were separated by an essential distinction from the class which had preceded them, and which still continued to be the type of the common prophet. They did not seek to kindle either the enthusiasm or the fanaticism of the multitude; they swam not with but against the stream. They were not patriotic, at least in the ordinary sense of that word; they prophesied not good but evil for their people (Jer. xxviii. 8). Until their time the nation had sprung up out of the conception of Jehovah; now the conception of Jehovah was casting the nation into the shade. The natural bond between the two was severed, and the relation was henceforward viewed as conditional. As God of the righteousness which is the law of the whole universe, Jehovah could be Israel's God only in so far as in

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 462. [2] Ibid., p. 472. [3] Ibid., p. 473.

Israel the right was recognised and followed. The ethical element destroyed the national character of the old religion. It still addressed itself, to be sure, more to the nation and to society at large than to the individual; it insisted less upon a pure heart than upon righteous institutions; but nevertheless the first step towards universalism had been accomplished, towards at once the general diffusion and the individualisation of religion. Thus, although the prophets were far from originating a new conception of God, they none the less were the founders of what has been called 'ethical monotheism.' But with them this ethical monotheism was no product of the 'self-evolution of dogma,' but a progressive step which had been called forth simply by the course of events."

We shall have occasion to consider at length in the sequel the various positions here assumed. In the meantime particular attention must be called to this iteration of "Amos was the first to" say this or that, "Hosea first perceived" this and the other thing, or "to Elijah was first revealed" something else. So Wellhausen says in another connection:[1] "It was Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah who introduced the movement against the old popular worship of the high places; in doing so they are not in the least actuated by a deep-rooted preference for the temple of Jerusalem, but by ethical motives, which manifest themselves in them for the first time in history, and which we can see springing up in them before our very eyes." If these statements are allowed to go unchallenged, they amount to practically the begging of the whole question—for the very thing we want to prove is whether or not there was antecedent teaching such as that of these men. But the statements are utterly unwarranted by any facts at our disposal.

It would be a hazardous thing to say of any writer in whose works we first come upon the enunciation of a truth, that he was the very first to grasp it. And in

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 47.

regard to Amos and Hosea all that we can admit in the meantime is, that these are the two who furnish us the earliest undisputed contemporary writings. But even if they are the *first* to hold the views ascribed to them, is it necessary to conclude that they were mistaken when they refer to the historical development of the religion? This is the view we have seen Stade takes of Hosea—viz., that he was wrong in declaring that Israel had declined from the true religion; and that he thus prepared the way for the unhistorical theocratic view which came to prevail. And yet is not this just one of the points on which we ought to take the true prophet to be a safe guide and a skilful interpreter? The polemic of the prophets, says Wellhausen,[1] "is a purely prophetic one—*i.e.*, individual, 'theopneust,' in the sense that it is independent of all traditional and preconceived human opinions;" and Robertson Smith[2] says, "The possession of a single thought about Jehovah, not derived from current religious teaching, but springing up in a soul as a word from Jehovah Himself, is enough to constitute a prophet, and lay on him the duty of speaking to Israel what he has learned of Israel's God." Now it is undoubted that to the prophets Israel's God was closely connected with Israel's national life; it was "God in history," not God in His essence, that was the subject of their study, the theme of their teaching. And if, on their own proper theme, in their own prophetic sphere, they are wrong, in what respect, we may ask, are they true prophets at all?

Supposing still, however, that these prophets "were the first" to teach as they did, let us consider the situation that arises. What we would have to believe is that,

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 48. [2] Prophets, p. 182.

whereas, as Wellhausen[1] expresses the matter, the nation had up to the time of Hosea been the ideal of the religion in actual realisation, and the people at large had no feeling that they were doing anything inconsistent with the principles of the national religion, this prophet now confronted them with a new ideal, and taught them that their present religious position was a declension from an earlier one. Now it is conceivable that a view taken up by Hosea or Amos might afterwards become the basis of an unhistorical conception; it is conceivable that Hosea or Amos may have given hints of past events or personages that were afterwards expanded into so-called history. But I doubt very much whether the ideas of a whole generation as to its own past history are thus produced by the *new* teaching of one or two men. For if the view originated with Hosea, and gained acceptance straightway on his word, we have to suppose that this one man not only introduced a new conception of the whole of the past history, but obliterated from the consciousness another conception of it which had previously existed. If language has any meaning at all, the hearers of Hosea were at one with him as regards the facts of the history and their significance, however degenerate they were in practice. In the line of prophets that follow Hosea, we see no indication of the gradual acceptance of his view, which must have taken place if it was new. His view is that of all the prophets. The position, in fact, is entirely forced and unnatural, and shows simply the shifts to which one is reduced in pushing his theory through at all hazards. Moreover, we are not so anxious in the meantime to know the influence of Hosea's views on succeeding times, as to know the origin of Hosea's own

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 491.

views; and as to this, the vital point, we get no information. Modern writers demand development; but we have now found and shall always find that when it comes to a vital point like this, their development breaks down: whereas the Biblical writers set before us a development which, at all events, in this case is comprehensible, and, taken in connection with the explicit declarations of the prophets before us, answers the conditions of the present problem. For it is to be observed that Hosea does not deal in generalities in stating his view. It might have been supposed that, like other moralists, he was a *laudator temporis acti*, and being of a melancholy spirit, dwelt on the "good old times" that were gone. But this is not the case. He does indeed speak of the early love of Jahaveh's bride for her Husband, and he does blame the people of his age for falling very low; but he lays his finger on certain positive sins in their past history, and indicates definite places in which their sin had been most flagrant[1]—a proof that he was not talking at large or inventing past history—a proof that the conscience of the nation could not gainsay what was laid to its charge.

And now, before examining in detail the fundamental points in dispute, let us eliminate the elements of the problem in regard to which there is no controversy.

1. In the first place, it is not denied that the prophets waged war against the popular religion and worship. The prophets themselves tell us so, and the historical books no less distinctly. The question simply is, Was the popular religion with which they were in conflict the only accepted and recognised religion of the nation up to their time, or was it a declension from it and perversion of

[1] See Hosea iv. 15 ff.; ix. 10, 15; x. 5; xiii. 1.

it? The modern school leaves it to be inferred that it was the religion of Mosaism; and Duhm seems to say as much when he declares[1] that the prophetic consciousness was at variance with the Jahaveh religion as it was represented at the Temple of Solomon; and Wellhausen also, when he says:[2] "In old times the nation had been the ideal of religion in actual realisation: the prophets confronted the nation with an ideal to which it did not correspond." So far as the attitude of the prophets to the mere externals of religion is concerned, we shall have to speak at length by-and-by. In the meantime, we insist upon the recognition of a religion altogether distinct from the popular conceptions and the popular abuses which the prophets condemned. And the more sober-minded writers of the critical school do not deny this. Reuss, for example, says:[3] "We are persuaded that the essential elements of the collective view of the prophets are older than our oldest witnesses." So Smend says:[4] "Clearly there were fundamental views of religion which the people had in common with the prophets." It is difficult to understand how any other view of the matter could be entertained in the face of the two facts, (1) that the prophets themselves ever appeal to the conscience of the people in attestation of the truths which they deliver; and (2) that the people in Elijah's days, for example, should have recognised the force of the appeal so readily and universally, and acted upon it so energetically. From the beginning to the end there cannot be found a passage in which a prophet speaks as if he were uttering a new or strange truth, and there are many expressions plainly implying that they were simply enforcing what they and their

[1] Theol. d. Propheten, p. 10 ff. Cf. p. 53. [2] Hist. of Israel, p. 491.
[3] Geschichte, p. 316. [4] Theol. Stud. u. Krit., 1876, pp. 599-664.

hearers accepted as undisputed and indisputable. This is a feature of the prophetic teaching to which the modern theory does not give sufficient weight. It is quite characteristic. If we compare, for example, the claims of Mohammed on the attention of his countrymen, we find that he indeed appeals to antecedent teachers who had taught the same truth, but he insists upon it that *now*, in his person, there was a special promulgation of the truth to the people of Arabia. Nay, the Gospel itself claims to rest upon Old Testament revelation; yet the Founder of Christianity spoke with authority, setting his "I say unto you" over against the commands of the men of old time; and St Paul contrasts the time of Gospel revelation with the antecedent times of ignorance. The Old Testament prophets, however, give us no hint that they have got a clearer or more precise message to their times than had been given of old time. On the contrary, they describe their own times as degenerate and apostate, and no one dares to contradict them. The consensus of the whole "goodly fellowship" of the prophets on this point should not be lightly passed over.

As to the existence of an ideal religion side by side with an actual one, the experience of the world has proved but too clearly that the practices of a people, or their ordinary conceptions in any given epoch, are not to be confounded with the principles of the faith which they profess. Religious belief and religious practice, indeed, so react upon one another, and practice, as experience shows, is so strong, that it would be vain to search for a people at any time exhibiting a *pure* faith in the proper sense of the expression. We need not expect to find in ancient Israel a faith untarnished by superstition or free from the limitations of ignorance. It is both un-

scientific and unscriptural to look in the Old Testament for either a theology or a religious life which was *semper, ubique, et ab omnibus.* But it is surely easy enough to distinguish between hindrances or corruptions and purity of germ. What the prophets themselves plainly represent is, that there had been made known to their people of old time a better faith and a purer worship than those of the heathen nations, or of their own degenerate people; and in testimony of this, they think it sufficient to appeal to the consciences of their hearers.[1]

At the same time, we must recognise to the full what was the actual condition of the popular religion. The Biblical writers do not conceal this from us, but prophet and historian alike dwell upon it as evidence of the national defection. In the first place, they admit that the ancestors of Israel were idol-worshippers, when they say that the fathers of the patriarchs "beyond the river" Euphrates served other gods, and claim for Abraham a special knowledge of the true God. Then history and experience alike go to show that the sojourn in Egypt had a deteriorating influence on the old patriarchal faith; and finally, the position of the people in the midst of the idolatrous nations of Canaan and surrounding lands is ever to be kept in view in estimating the complex product of religious life at the time at which we have undoubted contemporary accounts. When we remember how long it takes for pure religious conceptions to work themselves into the practical recognition of a nation, how isolated Israel was in its days of independence among surrounding nations, and above all, how much tendency there is in human nature — as witness the course of

[1] Cf. also Micah vi. 4, Jer. vii. 25, Isa. lxiii. 11, Mal. iv. 4. Cf. König, Offenbarungsbegriff des Alten Testaments, vol. i. p. 57.

ecclesiastical history—by the imperfection of language for one thing, and by the infirmity of human nature above all, to run down to practical heathenism; and how superstitious ideas and superstitious practices survive even when there is no external inciting motive,—we need not wonder at the low ideas which prevailed among the common people in the days of Amos and Hosea and much later, or at the tenacity with which superstition kept its hold long after the purest-minded of the prophets had delivered their message. The thing we do wonder at is, how a succession of prophets kept so far above the level of the ordinary conceptions, and the wonder does not cease but takes a new phase when we come back to the only true explanation—viz., that this nation, so perverse and yet so highly favoured, had been at an earlier time the recipient of a higher truth, up to whose level the best of the nation strove to keep their contemporaries.

2. Nor need it be disputed that there was an advance in the prophets' own conceptions of religion. In maintaining that there was a national religion made known to Israel and preserved by the prophets, apart from the mere popular conceptions, we are not to be held as maintaining that some complete scheme of theology was in their hands, from which there was no possibility of advance. The writings of the prophets are before us to refute such an idea, should it be entertained. The days are past when it was thought admissible, in arguing a theological point, to cite texts promiscuously from any of the books of Scripture, because all were inspired; and to handle the Bible as if it were a code or encyclopædia of theological doctrines. Nor need we expect the religion taught by the prophets to be a philosophical or theological system. The truth which the prophets

taught was in themselves a germinating influence, and whether by the events occurring on the political stage, or by their own God-guided reflections, or by the condition of the men among whom they lived and moved, they rose from a lower to a higher stage of spiritual perception. The works of the writing prophets which lie before us show a variety in each writer's conception of Jahaveh's character and of His relation to Israel and the world at large. Amos dwells particularly on the attribute of righteousness; Hosea's favourite mode of viewing God is from the side of love; while Isaiah represents Him as the exalted one, the sovereign ruler. But we are never safe in making any individual writer the exponent of any single conception—as many are inclined to do. The various views of the prophets are not so much stages in an orderly progression, as different aspects of one truth which, from personal temperament or from the nature of his surroundings, each prophet was led to emphasise, although each one gives indications more or less explicit that other aspects of it are not ignored by him. We may not indeed observe a strict advance from attribute to attribute in the case of each succeeding writer, yet there is on the whole an advance in the one grand conception as the periods succeed one another, till at a certain late stage we can note a marked difference as compared with the earlier. The ideas of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, for example, are a clear advance upon the more general truths taught by Amos; but there is no inconsistency between them—there is simply the advance in spiritual perception. Later prophets have a wider idea of the world, but they have the same idea of the relation of God to it. To the mind of all the prophets and Old Testament writers, the

"nation is the unit of organisation and life. Even the new covenant of Jeremiah is made with the people; though it operates first upon individuals, it is in order to gather them into a people."[1] What is maintained is, that the point from which the very earliest prophets start is not the low platform of nature religion, or even the narrow ground of simple national religion, but one infinitely higher, and one reached by an antecedent development which the modern school will insist on placing farther down in history—in other words, that from the first the idea is moral or ethical and not naturalistic. That the prophets should have attained purer and more spiritual conceptions of Jahaveh as time went on and events taught them, it is but reasonable to suppose; though here, as elsewhere, we must beware of putting that first in order of time which appears most elementary in conception: for all prophets had not the same insight; and it might be given to one at a comparatively early period to catch glimpses of a truth which men of a succeeding age hardly perceived. The post-exilian prophets, for example, do not seem on the whole to have ever reached the height attained by Isaiah and Jeremiah, although they enjoyed the advantage of having their prophecies to instruct them. Even the prophecies of Balaam are in one respect more advanced than those of the second half of the book of Isaiah; for in the latter there is a constant polemic against the gods of the heathen, whereas in the former the unique character of Jahaveh is boldly asserted. It was by political events and the fate of the nation generally that the best spirits were educated into more spiritual truths, and the progress of the evolution or revelation of divine truth was controlled, as always, by provi-

[1] A. B. Davidson, in Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 177.

dential circumstances; but the truth to be developed was already there.

These two points being admitted, however, there still remains for the new theory the difficulty of explaining the prophetic ideas apart from an antecedent revelation of them to the nation. The modern historians, in their negation of a pure *pre-prophetic* religion, are ever faced with the task of explaining the rise of pure *prophetic* religion. They do not allow themselves a sufficient starting-point for the development; for the prophetic religion, when we meet it, is not of a germinal or elementary character. They are forced to make sudden transitions and assume such extraordinary changes, as invest the theory with difficulties much greater than those attending the Biblical view.

I confess that it is extremely difficult for me, not only to believe the position that is taken up, but even to apprehend it as a possibility. That Israel, with nothing distinctively peculiar to start with beyond the bare belief that Jahaveh was their only national God, should have adopted and absorbed elements the most diverse, and still have remained Israel; that the elements absorbed should have been the most distinctively heathenish and low, and yet that the result of it all was not an eclecticism, but a product *sui generis;* and that all the time this transmutation was going on, a body of men, whose official basis rested on heathenism, should have lashed their countrymen with invective and threatening for forsaking the religion of their fathers, — all this is to me as great a psychological and moral miracle as any of the miracles recorded in Scripture. Before we can accept it as a true account of Israel's religious development, we must be satisfied on three points.

First, It must be shown by clear proofs that before the time of the writing prophets the religious beliefs and observances of Israel were on the same level as those of their neighbours, and that this state of things was accepted by the enlightened men of the time as the normal and authorised religion.

Second, Some differentiating element must be pointed out sufficient to explain the fact that Israel remained Israel all this time. In other words, a national religion sufficient to mark off the people as a nation must be exhibited.

Third, The process of development must be pointed out in the historical stadia, through which, from the rudimentary stage, Israel arrived at the "ethic monotheism" of the prophets.

The chapters that follow will be devoted to a consideration of these points. In chapters vii. to x. the main points relied upon to prove the low tone of pre-prophetic religion will be discussed. Chapter xi. will treat of the Jahaveh religion; and in chapter xii. we shall consider in what way it is alleged the pre-prophetic passed into the prophetic, and Israel arrived at the ethic monotheism of the prophets.

CHAPTER VII.

PRE-PROPHETIC RELIGION—NAMING OF THE DEITY.

Statement of the critical position as to the low tone of the pre-prophetic religion, and various lines of proof indicated—Subject of the present chapter: Consideration of the argument drawn from the names of Deity—It is argued from the free use of the name of Baal in the formation of proper names, that the persons so employing it had no aversion to the Baal worship—Argument examined: Baal as a common appellative name—Condition of Israel in Canaan described—Parallel cases of syncretism at the present day—No case can be cited of undoubted names of heathen deities being so used—The argument drawn from the correspondence of Hebrew names with those of Babylonian deities—The argument proves too much, and the mode of bestowing names is different from the usual Hebrew custom—This whole mode of reasoning proceeds on a false system of mythologising, and fails to furnish the historical proof which is wanted.

That the religion of Israel before the time of the writing prophets was on the level of the religions of neighbouring peoples, and that these prophets first taught the truth of monotheism, are positions so confidently asserted in modern times that the ordinary reader is apt to take them as truths that cannot be disputed. Thus Pfleiderer says[1] it may be taken as tolerably certain that the Hebrews in their prehistoric period participated in the polytheistic nature-religion of the rest of the Semites.

[1] Die Geschichte der Religion (1869), p. 273.

And with more definiteness of detail, and indicating more precisely what period of time is referred to, Kuenen says:[1] "At first the religion of Israel was *polytheism*. During the eighth century B.C. the great majority of the people still acknowledged the existence of many gods, and, what is more, they worshipped them. And we can add that during the seventh century, and down to the beginning of the Babylonish exile (586 B.C.), this state of things remained unaltered. Jeremiah could say to his contemporaries, without fear of contradiction, 'According to the number of thy cities are thy gods, O Judah' (Jer. xi. 13; ii. 28). This polytheism of the mass of the people cannot be regarded as a subsequent innovation; on the contrary, everything is in favour of its originality. In the accounts of the preceding centuries we never seek for it in vain. But—and this is decisive—the prophets' conception of Jahveh's being and of His relation to Israel is inexplicable, unless the God whom they now acknowledge to be the only one was at first only one of many gods. The relation in which Jahveh stands to Israel is the same as, for instance, that of Chemosh to the Moabites; Jahveh would never have become Israel's special property, as it were, and would never have come to dwell exclusively in Canaan, if he had been held from the beginning to be the only true God. That limitation is, on the contrary, extremely natural, if he was originally Israel's tribal God, who, as such, had many other gods beside him."

The proofs which are adduced in support of this position are many and various. It is maintained, for example, that the Israelites spoke of their God in the same way as their neighbours spoke of their gods, and even applied to Him the names of Gentile deities, or regarded those

[1] Religion of Israel (Eng. tr.), vol. i. p. 223 f.

deities as possessing similar powers and attributes; that they regarded Him as limited to one place or certain places, and powerful only or chiefly in His own territory; that they thought it not derogatory to His dignity to make visible representations of their deity; that moral qualities were not prominent, or even essential, in the conception of His character; or even, as some critics maintain, that they considered it a religious duty to offer to Him human sacrifices.

All these points are held to be capable of proof from the writings to which we have restricted ourselves, and, as features of the religion of Israel, they are maintained to be distinctly visible in the period of which we have undoubted historic knowledge. Not only so; but it is asserted also that we have conclusive proof that these religious beliefs rest upon and grow naturally out of a more primitive stage of religious culture, the lower condition of animism or fetishism which characterises the most savage peoples. Says Kuenen:[1] "To what one might call the universal, or at least the common rule, that religion begins with fetishism, then develops into polytheism, and then, but not before, ascends to monotheism—that is to say, if this highest stage be reached—to this rule the Semites are no exception;" and Stade proceeds elaborately to prove that, in the documents before us, we have clear indications of the survival of these primitive conceptions and beliefs to historic times.

To the proofs brought forward in support of these positions, we must therefore now turn our attention; and in this chapter we consider primarily the argument based upon the Hebrew mode of naming the Deity.

We have to consider, first of all, the argument drawn

[1] Religion of Israel (Eng. tr.), vol. i. p. 225.

from the free use of the name of Baal in forming proper names, even in the families of the most pious Israelites. Thus Tiele:[1] "Even so zealous representatives of Jahvism as Saul and David named their children after Baal. Solomon, who built a magnificent temple to Jehovah, saw in that no hindrance to his erecting sanctuaries also for other gods, which, by later writers, was indeed imputed to him as a sin, but not by his own contemporaries. The Baal whom the prophet Elijah in the northern kingdom so vigorously contended against was not the native Baal, but the Phœnician, whom the Sidonian princess Jezebel, Ahab's wife, had introduced. His pupil Elisha and his adherent Jehu rooted out this foreign cultus with violence, but they did not interfere with the cultus of the native Ashera."

Now it is a well-known fact that the Israelites, like other Semitic nations, used the name of deity to a large extent in the formation of personal proper names. Names compounded with El, like Israel, and with parts of Jahaveh, like Jehoram, are the commonest in the language of nomenclature; and it cannot be disputed that the word Baal is thus found in compound proper names, and *that*, too, in the families of persons most distinguished for their reverence for the national God of the Hebrews. In the genealogical lists of Chronicles, we find a son of Saul named Eshbaal (1 Chron. viii. 33; ix. 39) called Ishbosheth in 2 Sam. ii. 8, and a son of David named Beeliada (1 Chron. xiv. 7). We have even such a combination as Bealiah (Baal is Jah) (1 Chron. xii. 5) as the name of one of David's adherents at Ziklag. Moreover, there is the well-known passage in Hosea (ii. 16, 17), "And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou

[1] Kompendium der Religionsgeschichte, § 53.

shalt call me Ishi [my husband], and shalt call me no more Baali [my master]. For I will take away the names of the Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be mentioned [or remembered] by their name." Here, then, is plain proof, not only that the name Baal was used in the formation of proper names without any sense of impropriety attaching to it, but that the Israelites of the northern kingdom, even up to Hosea's days, called their national God their Baal. It does not, however, follow that they identified their national God with the Baal of the surrounding Canaanites in the attributes they ascribed to him, much less that the pious parents who gave such names to their children named them purposely after the Baal of the Phœnicians or Canaanites.

To make this clear, it is necessary to remember that the word *baal* was a common noun among the Hebrews, a part of the language which they had in common with other Semitic races. It is not a question here of going back to the original meaning of a word, and basing an argument upon some old application of it, or on the supposed primary signification—a process of reasoning which sometimes leads to great confusion.[1] In the language as spoken at the time to which the passages cited refer, and as a common word in the language, we find *baal*, in the sense of lord or master (spelled, as we should say, with a small *b*). In Exod. xxi., in the so-called "Book of the Covenant," we find it used in both the senses of husband of a wife[2] and owner of an ox.[3] In the same way the verb *baal*, in the sense of to rule over, be master of, is

[1] See Note XIV.

[2] "If he is baal of a wife, his wife shall go out with him" (v. 3).

[3] "If an ox gore a man, &c., the baal of the ox shall be quit" (v. 28; cf. v. 29).

found in use in the language down to the time of Isaiah, who employs it in the verse, "other lords besides thee have had dominion over us" (Isa. xxvi. 13), and even as late as the time when the books of Chronicles were written.[1] To put it otherwise, there is no reason to suppose that the Hebrews first used the word *baal* after they came into Canaan and became acquainted with the Baal worship practised there. Like the other word *adon*, which also means lord, it was a general appellative name. The wife called her husband *baali* (my lord), and the slave called his owner by the same name. And if a pious Israelite had been asked who was the god whom he and his family or nation revered, there could have been to him no impropriety in saying that his Baal or his Adon (*i.e.*, his Lord, with a capital letter) was Jahaveh. The suffix in the passage in Hosea shows that the word was used in this appellative sense. So when an Israelite said, "Jahaveh is our Elohim," he was employing the word Elohim which denoted the gods of the nations, a plural word which *may* have had its origin among a polytheistic people; but we cannot conclude from such phraseology that he put Jahaveh on the level of the gods of the nations, for the expression, when it occurs, generally denotes the very reverse.[2] But the circumstances to which Hosea refers show where the danger lay, and how it actually emerged. The Canaanites, having the same word in their language, with that mythological tendency to which all language is liable, had, so to speak, come to write Baal with a capital letter. It was the only name they had for their god, or, at all events, they used it and Adon as proper names, and hence the origin of the myth-

[1] See 1 Chron. iv. 22, "who had the dominion in Moab."

[2] See Note XV.

ological Baal and Adonis. Moreover, not having attained, or not having held fast to, the idea of one god, they made "lords many," so that there was a lord (*baal* or *adon*) of this or that quality or place; the lordship of one became a host of Baalim. So long as Israel was not involved in this system—and the very fact of the free use of the word *baal* as an appellative at the time when they were confessedly professors of the Jahaveh religion, is proof to me that the idolatrous use was of gradual and later growth—they might use the word *baal* in the old sense, because it connoted nothing inconsistent with their ancestral religion. Not only Hosea, however, but the historians of Israel as well, tell us only too plainly how, in the northern kingdom, there took place a mingling of impure elements with the old Jahaveh religion. From a simple naming of shrines as they were named among the Canaanites, their lips and ears became familiarised first with the religious nomenclature, and then with the religious conceptions of their neighbours. The Baal of this place had, we may suppose, the reputation of curing this disease, and the Baal of that of giving good harvests, and so on; just as the Virgin of certain places and the local saints have at the present day. Little by little, through their children associating with those of the Canaanites, through the servants and labourers who belonged to the soil, through the atmosphere, as we say, the Israelites conformed to the polytheistic ideas. Among the mass of the people, if an actual syncretism did not take place, the sharp distinction between Jahaveh and Baal was dulled and blunted, and thus came about the situation so graphically painted by Hosea, when the corn and wine and oil were ascribed to the goodness of the *baalim*,[1] and the people were in

[1] The association by Hosea of religious declension with material pros-

danger of forgetting that Jahaveh who was the God of their nation was one lord. Any one who has lived in foreign countries knows how insidiously, through daily use of language and common associations of life, one comes to think somewhat as the natives, and, employing their language, to give inadvertently a tacit recognition to their beliefs. And the case we have supposed has its actual parallel, so far as the use of a name with different connotations goes. The Mohammedans give God the name of *Allah*. It is the common Arabic name for God; and the Arabic-speaking Christians who live side by side with them use the same name. But a Mohammedan who knows his Koran, and a Christian who knows his New Testament, attach very different ideas to the common name which they employ; and though both are monotheists, no doubt each has some confused notion that the God whom he worships is actually a different being from the deity of the other. Yet in outlying places in Syria, where education is not known, a practical syncretism takes place, so that though the Muslims and Christians recognise themselves as such respectively, they can give very little account of the distinction that separates them, and pay in common a superstitious reverence to the same localities or sacred objects.[1] It is not difficult to conceive

perity should not be overlooked. In the same way in the book of Judges, periods of *rest* always precede times of subjection. This is the philosophy of history which is common to all the Old Testament writers.

[1] Some years ago I met at Jerusalem a young Syrian Christian who had been sent by the Bishop of Jerusalem (Bishop Gobat) as an evangelist to Es-Salt (Ramoth-Gilead). He found Muslims and Christians living side by side engaged in the tillage of the soil, each sect recognising themselves as adherents of their ancestral religion, but unable to explain the difference subsisting between them, except in certain formal expressions or observances. "Are you a Christian?" he would say to one, and the answer was, "I am." "What is your faith?" "In the name of the

how such a syncretism should have occurred in the northern kingdom, on the account given by the Biblical writers, that it was cut off from religious communication with the southern, in which the Temple stood, and that it contained, besides, a larger admixture of Canaanitish elements. Hosea's words become intelligible when it is perceived that the word *baal*, innocent enough in itself, and capable of being employed in a good sense, had been the occasion of so much mischief. The very word, he said, would, in the coming time, be taken out of their lips, shunned for its evil associations and the painful recollections which it awakened; and the idea, good enough in itself, which it once denoted, that Israel was the wife of Jahaveh, would be expressed by another term, which *had the same meaning*, but was not surrounded with the same associations. Parallel cases in ecclesiastical and political history will at once occur to the mind of the reader. All this, I say, is conceivable on the Biblical view that Israel had fallen from a better faith and practice; but it is hardly conceivable on any supposition that at Hosea's time, or immediately before it, the Israelites connoted no more by the name Jahaveh than the Canaanites did by the name of the Baalim, and that Hosea, for the first time, was trying to raise them from an ancestral polytheism or syncretism to the recognition of one God. Such a supposition

Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." "Are you a Muslim?" another was asked, and he could repeat, "In the name of the merciful and compassionate Allah," and perhaps "there is no deity but Allah; Mohammed is the apostle of Allah." But beyond this they could not go; and the Christian, pressed to explain his creed, showed how Muslim influences and surroundings had influenced him. "What is meant by the Father?" "That is Allah the most exalted." "And the Son; has Allah a Son?" To which the reply came, "Allah forbid." How easy it would be to show, on critical development principles, that we have here the crude beginnings of Christianity and Islam!

simply contradicts the prophet to his face. There is one consideration which seems to be quite decisive on this subject. Whereas we find proper names compounded with the name Baal as freely (though not as extensively) as with the name El, it is remarkable that we have no instances of a similar use of unequivocal proper names of heathen deities—such as Melkart, Eshmun, Astarte, &c.[1] —which we should certainly expect if the Israelites were the polytheists they are made out to be. There is, in fact, no instance of any name of God being used to form proper names except the names that were applicable to their own national God. "Even in the times," says Nöldeke,[2] "which are reckoned those of the worst idolatry, there does not appear a single name of a foreign god in the proper names of Israelites—a proof that the people, even when they sacrificed to Baal and Astarte, ever felt that they were wrong, and that they might never denote themselves as worshippers of their deities by naming themselves after them. That no member of the house of Ahab, which the tradition still indicates as the most idolatrous, bore the name of Baal, and that, on the contrary, that king's son, by his name Jehoram, as well as his sister or daughter Athaliah, belonged to the god of the country, is here significant enough."

From another quarter instances have lately been pointed out of what is alleged to have been the employment by the Israelites of names of heathen deities, without any compunction as to their idolatrous associations, and affording a presumption that the pre-prophetic religion of Israel was not the pure Jahavism which Biblical writers represent it to be. Sayce, in his "Hibbert Lecture" on the

[1] Baethgen, Beiträge zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte, p. 145.
[2] In Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morg. Gesell., vol. xv. p. 809.

religion of the ancient Babylonians, has pointed out various indications of the contact of Babylonian civilisation and religion with those of Palestine, surviving in names of places, such as Nebo, Anu and Anatu, and Sinai.[1] The existence of such names, which are names of Babylonian deities, attached to places in Palestine, is certainly significant. The recent discovery of the clay tablets at Tell-el-Amarna may, by showing the early prevalence of Babylonian influence, make the thing more intelligible: it may also tend to modify the view which Sayce seems to hold on the special point before us. It is this: Among the Babylonian deities whose names have been recovered from the inscriptions is one whose Accadian name was translated into the Semitic Ramânu = the exalted one, which the Hebrew writers have handed down to us under the form Rimmon. Now Rimmon was the name of the supreme god of the Syrians of Damascus, and was there identified with the sun-god Hadad.[2] The name, he says, made its way to the non-Semitic tribes of the Taurus, and to Edom, and "like Hadad of Edom, David of Israel will thus have borne a name which the people about him applied to their sovereign god." Elsewhere[3] he explains that Hadad, the supreme Baal or sun-god, whose worship extended from Carchemish to Edom and Palestine, is spoken of by Shalmaneser under the abbreviated name of Dáda, as a name current in the north; and that in the south the name was confounded with the Semitic word which appears in Assyrian as *dadu*, "dear little child." This is the word, he says, which we have in Be-dad or Bendad, the father of the Edomite Hadad; we have it also in the David of the Old Testament, David or Dod being

[1] Hibbert Lecture, p. 42. [2] Ibid., p. 202 ff.
[3] Ibid., p. 55 ff. Cf. Modern Review, Jan. 1884.

the masculine of the feminine form Dido. Thus, according to Sayce, the names of Dodo and David point to a worship of the sun-god under the title of the "beloved one" in southern Canaan as well as in Phœnicia. This he thinks is confirmed by the new reading of the Moabite Stone by Socin and Smend, which would show that the northern Israelites worshipped a Dodo or Dod by the side of Jahaveh, or rather adored the supreme God under the name of Dod (דודה) as well as under that of Jahaveh. According to this reading of the inscription, Mesha says that he carried away the *arel* (or altar) of Dodo from Ataroth and dragged it before Chemosh, and from Nebo the *arels* of Jahaveh, which he likewise dragged before Chemosh. It is suggested that Dod or Dodo was an old title of the supreme God in the Jebusite Jerusalem, and that this explains the word *Dodi* ("my beloved") in the brief song in Isa. v. We can easily understand, he concludes, how a name of this kind, with such a signification, should have been transferred by popular affection from the deity, to the king of whom it is said that "all Israel and Judah loved him" (1 Sam. xviii. 16).[1]

What Sayce maintains is, that the name David, as also the names Saul and Solomon,[2] were not names given in childhood, but were subsequently applied. This is actually stated in regard to Solomon (2 Sam. xii. 24,

[1] As long ago as 1842 Daumer explained the name David, "beloved one," as properly a name of the god after whom the Moloch-worshipping king called himself. And in keeping with the idea that the victim offered to Moloch was regarded as his bride, he explains the names Hebron, Kirjath Arba, where David reigned, as derived from *haber*, a companion, lover, and *raba*, to lie down. In the same connection Og, king of Bashan, is explained as a fiery oven, and his famous bedstead as the iron bed on which the victims were laid.—Feuer und Molochdienst der alten Hebräer, p. 99 f.

[2] Hibbert Lecture, pp. 51, 52.

25); as to David, he inclines to the view of those critics who maintain that his name originally was El-hanan or Baal-hanan, and that in 2 Sam. xxi. 19, xxiii. 24, we ought to read "Elhanan who is Dodo" or David. Saul too, he says, is a secondary name, meaning in Hebrew the one asked for by the people; but it really was the name of a Babylonian deity, Savul or Sawul,[1] transported to Edom, and perhaps also to Palestine. Solomon also is a divine name, the cuneiform inscriptions informing us that Sallimmanu, "the god of peace," was a god honoured particularly in Assyria, where the name of more than one king (Shalman-eser) was compounded with it.

Similarly, Sayce claims that the name of Moses[2] is not derived from the language of Egypt, but from *Masu*, an older form of Semitic than that preserved in the Old Testament—*i.e.*, the Assyrian. The word means "hero," and is applied to more than one deity, particularly to Adar, a form of the sun-god, and to Merodach, the tutelar god of Babylon, and Nergal, the sun of night. It also signifies "collector of books." In the sense of "hero" it made its way into astrology, and Mâsu, the hero of astronomers, must have been the sun-god. It is not more strange, he continues, that a name thus intimately associated with the religious and astrological beliefs of Babylonia should have found its way west, than that names like Nebo (where Moses died), in sight of the "moon city" Jericho, and Sin, which last we know, from a Himyaritic inscription, had been carried south into Arabia, should have been so transported. It may have been carried north as well, and perhaps the wilderness of Sin is a trace of it; and therefore a shrine may have

[1] Hibbert Lecture, p. 54. [2] Ibid., p. 43 ff.

existed on Sinai before the Israelites begged to be allowed to go a three days' journey to it.

Once more, the name Joseph, which, in the Old Testament, is variously derived from Hebrew roots,[1] is the name of a deity that was worshipped by the older inhabitants of Canaan. Thothmes III., more than two centuries before the date given by Egyptologists for the exodus, mentions on the walls of Karnak the names of cities captured by him in Palestine, among which are Yaqab-el (Jacob the god) and Iseph-el ("Joseph the god"). Therefore, he says, we are tempted to think that "the house of Joseph" may have belonged to an earlier period than that in which it was applied to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, and that perhaps "the house of Joseph" was simply "Beth-el." For in Assyrian, *asipu* or *asip* is = diviner, and the phrase "house of the oracle" is actually met with. Therefore, though not proved, it is probable that Joseph was originally equal to the Babylonian *asipu*, "the god of the oracle," and that long before the Israelitish house of Joseph took possession of Luz, it had been a house of Joseph in another sense, and the sanctuary of a Canaanitish oracle.

Now what is the bearing of all this on the subject before us? The facts adduced would seem to show that not only names of places in Palestine and the west bore names which were also the names of Assyrian deities, but that even the names of individuals placed by the Biblical writers in the time of the Jahaveh religion, came originally from the same source; and, as Sayce would lead us to infer, were knowingly bestowed upon them with a reference to the deities so named. The conclusion would be that at the time, say, of David and

[1] Hibbert Lecture, p. 49 f.

Solomon, not to speak of earlier times, the recognition of Jahaveh as the only God of the Israelites was not so strong as to prevent the free use of the names of other deities beside Him; or, at all events, it did not preclude the naming of Him by the names of other gods.

There are, however, several circumstances to be taken into account which will, if I mistake not, greatly modify such a conclusion. It will be observed, in the first place, that the names upon which this argument is founded are originally appellative names in Assyrian: Dâd, *the exalted one;* Sallimmanu, *the peaceful one;* Mâsu, *lord;* Asip, *diviner;* and so forth. Some of them, as Sallimmanu and Asip,[1] are found also as common appellative names in Hebrew with the same sense; and Dâd has been shown by Sayce himself to be capable of connection with the Hebrew stem meaning *to love.* Then, further, we are to remember the manner in which, and the extent to which, the Semitic inhabitants of Assyria bestowed names upon their gods. The words of Sayce, in another part of his Hibbert Lectures,[2] are necessary here in order to give us some idea of the mythology of the polytheistic Semitic peoples:—

"Around the three chief gods," he says, "were grouped the multitudinous deities which Accadian superstition or Semitic piety had invented or dreamed of. Assur-natsir-pal declares that there were '65,000 great gods of heaven and earth'; and though we may doubt whether the Assyrian king was not indulging in a little royal exaggeration, it is certain that the task of enumerating them 'all would have exhausted the most indefatigable of priestly scribes. Besides the numberless minor deities of the towns and villages, there were the divine titles out of which new gods had been evolved; divinities which owed their existence to the linguistic or literary errors of the Semites; and finally, foreign gods like Kiltum

[1] אַשָּׁף See Sayce, Hibbert Lecture, p. 50 f. [2] Ibid., p. 215 ff.

and Sumaliya of the Kossæans, or Lagarmai of Susa. . . . When we remember how the background of the vast pantheon was filled with the obscure deities and spirits of the ancient Accadian cult, whose names survived in magical charms and exorcisms, while the air above was occupied by the '300 spirits of heaven,' and the earth below by the '600 spirits of earth,' we begin to realise the force of the expression which made the supreme gods rulers of the legions of earth and sky. *Bil Kissat*, 'the lord of hosts,' was a phrase full of significance to the believing Babylonian."[1]

We thus see that the ancient Babylonians, like the Aryan nations, in order to denote forces operative behind observed phenomena, employed names expressing the agency or operation, and whether or not these were originally applied to one supreme power, they became personifications of individual forces or names of superhuman beings; but the names themselves had primarily a simple enough and harmless enough signification. As to the existence of such Assyrian names in the Hebrew writings, Sayce points out that there were two periods at which we may assume an active contact with the Semitic thought of Assyria and that of Palestine, either early at the time of the immigration of the Abrahamic tribes from Ur of the Chaldees, or later on during the encroachments of the Assyrians westward, or even during the captivity in Babylon.[2] If we go back to the earliest of these times for the influence of Babylonian religion on the west, there will be nothing extraordinary in the prevalence of Assyrian names of places, or even the existence of proper names of persons corresponding to Babylonian names; for the Biblical writers place the beginnings of the distinctive monotheism of the Hebrews at the time of Abraham's immigration, and declare that the fathers of the patriarch served other gods beyond the river. To

[1] See Note XVI.

[2] Hibbert Lecture, p. 43.

place the introduction of such names as have been adduced at either of the later points of contact is surely too late for the purposes of the argument. For though it may be conceivable that legends or beliefs, such as are found in the earliest chapters of Genesis, may have been taken over from the Assyrians or Babylonians as late as the captivity, it is hardly conceivable that the names of David, Solomon, and Saul, not to say those of Joseph and Moses, got into the Hebrew language at that time, or even so comparatively early as the time at which the Assyrians as a conquering power first came upon the horizon of the Israelites, about the ninth century B.C.

We are therefore entitled to recognise the stems from which the names in question are derived as part of the linguistic stock of the Hebrews, which they had in common with their Semitic brethren in Assyria, and which they used and developed in their own way. If they were simple appellative terms at first, there is no reason why they should not have remained so in the hands of the Hebrews, but every reason to believe that they did. For this is just the distinctive peculiarity of the course which the development of Israel's religion followed—that whereas the heathen Semitic nations ran off into mythology, the Hebrews retained the primary sense of words, and were not led into the deification of mere qualities. The orthodox Mohammedans, to give an illustration of what I mean, have a list of ninety-nine excellent names by which they designate their god; and as they recite these one by one, telling a bead on a rosary with the utterance of each name, they never for a moment regard each as the name of a distinct deity; for as they tell the hundredth bead, they repeat the name of the One of whom all the other names are mere attributes—*Allah!*

This is an illustration of how the strong monotheistic instinct preserves itself safe from the influence of names. No one thinks of saying that when one man is named Abd-ul-Kereem, and another Abd-ul-Majeed, or a woman is named Kereemeh, Jameeleh, and so forth, the words Kereem and Majeed, &c., are names of distinct Muslim deities with female consorts; they remain mere adjectives expressing different qualities—*generous, glorious*—ascribed to the one God. Given the polytheistic bent, however, such names as these become raised to the rank of entities and deities, and so the Assyrian pantheon reached its immense proportions; for every quality that could be assigned to a god, or to the supreme God, takes its place as one of the gods many.

Now, when we remember the close resemblance between all the Semitic branches of language, is there anything remarkable in the fact that out of the extensive treasury of vocables that might thus become names of Assyrian deities, a very considerable number should coincide with Hebrew proper names? Why, if a volley were fired at random from the 65,000 (or even much smaller number of) names ascribed to the gods, I suppose that scarcely a vocable in the poor Hebrew language, noun, verb, or particle, would escape deification. That for such a common stem as that lying at the root of Solomon's name (the common Semitic word for peace), we should have to go to the name of an Assyrian deity—when these were so easily manufactured—seems a refinement of ingenuity that defeats its own end. For no Hebrew, on this mode of reasoning, would be safe to use a single word of his language without committing himself to polytheistic notions. If, for example, the name of Moses simply means lord or hero, and was applied to

many gods, the most that can be inferred from its presence in Hebrew is, that a root which is no longer found in Hebrew goes back to an old common Semitic origin, and may have been used like *baal* as a quite harmless word. A very significant circumstance is that this supposed mode of giving names is not in keeping with the Hebrew and general Semitic custom, according to which the proper names of this class are *compounded* with some name of deity, but are not, as this supposition requires, the actual names of the gods.[1] In view of this remarkable difference, and the fact that these names can all be explained in a simpler manner without going so far afield, I am brought to the conclusion that there is nothing in the argument beyond the wealth of learning with which it is maintained.

But in truth, this mode of arguing from names, apart from the historical circumstances, is quite misleading, and might be employed to prove the most absurd positions if applied to modern names. Yet it is just one of those arguments which have a glamour of something deep and recondite about them, and lead people to say "There is something in them." The thing regarding which we want information is not proved, and cannot be proved on this line of reasoning—viz., whether or not David's parents or his countrymen by the term Dâd understood a heathen god who at that time was reverenced by neighbouring peoples, and gave him the name in honour of that deity; or whether they called their own God Jahaveh by that name. The only attempt at his-

[1] If there are exceptions to the rule they are very rare. Baethgen mentions Anath found as a personal name, and perhaps also a name of deity in the expression Beth Anath.—Beiträge zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte, p. 141.

torical proof of this given by Sayce is the doubtful interpretation of an obscure phrase on the Moabite Stone. For the rest, his argument might as well prove that we still believe in the old Scandinavian gods because we name the days of the week from those deities; or that, for example, the existence of a family of the name of King in the United States, would show that the people of that country had a monarchical government; or that Isidore, the bishop of Seville, was a worshipper of Isis; or the Numidian bishop Asmunius was a worshipper of or named after the god Eshmun.[1]

The particulars we have been considering are but parts of a very wide subject, to which I can only briefly allude—the mythological treatment of the Old Testament. Some have carried this mode of viewing the materials to such an extent as to find the whole cycle of the Aryan Sun mythology in the stories of the patriarchs and the judges.[2] It seems to me that to identify proper names like those of David and Solomon with Assyrian names of deities, is but part of the same mode of reasoning; and that the explanation of the phenomena which are made to lend countenance to the view in either case is the same as I have hinted at. A language has a number of primary words denoting certain simple conceptions; and using these, it gives names to persons and to things cognisable by the senses, or intuitively perceived, or inferred by the reason. But if we find the same name applied to a visible and to an invisible thing, are we to conclude that it was first given to the invisible and then borrowed for the visible? This would be a most extraordinary freak of language and of thought. To keep to the examples we have had. If we find that *baal* is the common name for lord

[1] Baethgen, Beiträge, p. 141.

[2] See Note XVII.

or husband, but is also used of the deity, are we to suppose that a husband of a wife and the owner of an ox were so called because beforehand men had applied the name Baal to the unseen power or powers behind nature? Or because the name *adon* is found in Hebrew meaning master, and is also applied to the Lord, are we to suppose that earthly masters were so named because the mind had first arrived at the conclusion that there was a Master and Lord of Creation? Or again, if Molech (= ruler) is the name of any king, and also of a god of a people, are we to assume that all who called their kings by this name named them after the god? Further, if two kindred Semitic branches start with a common stock (so far as it goes) of such primary words, and we find that one branch ran into mythology, and instead of retaining the primary senses of their words, allowed them to become personifications, are we to conclude that another branch, which in clear historical times shows the widest divergence in its modes of conception, is to be held committed, in the use of the primary words, to the secondary application of them made by the kindred stock? When put in this way, I think that the precariousness (to say the least) of the mythological argument will appear. I do not think it is likely that a people first found names for a host of unseen beings or forces, before giving names to themselves and things around them (the very usage in Assyrian shows that the reverse was the case); and if in giving these names they employed the only materials their language furnished, it need not be surprising if gods and men and trees got finally the same or similar names. If the idea of strong attaches to the word *el*, and if a certain kind of tree is called "a strong thing," and the deity or nature spirit is called "the strong one," we are

not to jump to the conclusion that the tree was so named because a deity resided in it. But this is actually the view, as we shall see, that Stade takes in regard to this word; though such reasoning can only lead to mystification, as may be shown by another example. There is a word in Hebrew, Abir (אָבִיר), meaning "mighty" or "strong," and it is used as a name of God in the expressions "Mighty One of Israel" or "of Jacob." A slightly different form of the word, Abbir (אַבִּיר), is used as a name of the ox; it is applied also to the horse, as also to princes, and is used in the general sense of "strong." Now this word is so temptingly like the name of Apis, the Egyptian bull god (being, as has just been said, also applied to the bull), that mythologists have found it sufficient to hang an argument upon, to the effect that the calf-worship was originally part of the genuine Jahaveh religion, and that traces of the fact remain in the application of the very name of Apis to Jahaveh Himself. This is but a specimen of the kind of argument that perplexes those who do not look narrowly into the state of the matter; which simply resolves itself into this, that the idea of strength was naturally applied to the ox, or the horse, or a prince, and just as naturally attributed to God. It would be quite possible, on this mode of reasoning, to make heathen gods out of many of the words that we employ in daily speech.

It cannot be denied that Hebrew literature is singularly free from mythological ideas such as we find in other early literatures. With a highly poetic mode of conception, metaphors of the boldest kind and the freest personifications were not only possible, but were freely employed. Yet the writers of the Old Testament do not allow themselves to be carried away by their

words. The thing personified remains the thing all the time, though fields clap hands, and floods lift up their voices, and trees rejoice; and as it would be quite unfair to take such modes of expression as proofs that originally the fields and floods and trees were endowed with personality, so it is unfair to press such common appellative names as we have been considering into the service of a theory of mythology.

M. Renan, indeed, who is inclined to ascribe an inherent tendency to monotheism to all the Semitic races, or at least to the nomad sections of them, says that the attributing of life to words is the cause of mythology, and that the Semitic languages do not lend themselves much to these kinds of personification.[1] But the fact remains that other branches of the Semitic family ran into mythology, while the Hebrew race alone was preserved from it. The Semitic names El, Baal, &c., says Baudissin,[2] we judge to be different from the Aryan names not so much on account of the different genius of the Semitic language, as on account of the different conception formed of the deity. And Andrew Lang observes truly that it is a certain condition of thought, a certain habit of mind, and not a disease of this or that language, that is the cause of mythology. "It is just as easy," he says, "to say heaven is a lover, earth his wife, in a language where heaven is *Samâ* and earth is *Ars*, as in a language where heaven is *Uranus* and earth is *Gaea*, as in Greek, or where heaven is *Rangi* and earth is *Papa*, as in New Zealand." The same writer, after pointing out the insufficiency of the various explanations that have been given of the so-called *myths* of the Old Testament, and the essential and striking

[1] Hist. du peuple d'Israel, i. p. 46.
[2] Jahve et Moloch, p. 10.

differences to be perceived between them and the myths of kindred or similarly situated peoples, concludes: "The whole question may be insoluble, but is eternally attractive. Behind it all is the mystery of race and of *selection.* It is an ultimate fact in the history and government of the world, this eminent genius of one tiny people for religion. We know no more; and in M. Renan's own terms, the people was 'selected,' just as, in words more familiar, Israel is 'the chosen people.'" [1]

In conclusion, it seems to me that this reasoning from names proves either by far too much for the theory, or proves nothing at all to the argument in hand. If we are to infer from every Hebrew proper name which may correspond etymologically with some god-name of a foreign people, that the Israelites *at the time* they named their children in this manner believed in or gave reverence to these heathen gods, we manifestly prove too much, for there are far too many of these names, and at the time at which they are found we are in the light of history, and yet find no other proofs of recognition of such deities. Or if it is merely argued that the presence of such names among the Hebrews proves that "originally" the Hebrews believed in all these deities, the answer to the argument is twofold,—(*a*) that we do not know what is meant by "originally," and (*b*) that the so-called original belief may resolve itself into a necessary imperfection of language, whereby metaphor was employed, it might have been innocently enough, by the Israelite forefathers. We have seen, from this mode of mythological reasoning, enough to convince any fair-minded person how very vague and precarious are the conclusions to which it may be made to lead. Vague, because the argument does not

[1] The New Review, No. 3, August 1889.

undertake to show the precise historical periods at which the mythological conceptions prevailed, but hints at "original" usages, and faded myths, and so forth. And precarious, because the unwary reader is apt to conclude that every so-called mythological expression is an indication of a mythological belief on the part of the writer employing it, which certainly cannot be proved.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRE-PROPHETIC RELIGION CONTINUED—THE DWELLING-PLACE OF THE DEITY.

The critical position that Israel's God had His original dwelling on Sinai, or was limited to Canaan—Deborah's song—David driven out from the presence of the Lord—The wider reference of the argument—Association of Jahaveh with the sanctuaries of the land: His dwelling in the ark—In short, the worship of pre-prophetic Israel was that of the high places; and this, according to Stade, arose from the veneration paid to graves of ancestors—The view said to be confirmed by the veneration paid to trees, stones, &c., pointing to original fetish-worship—This part of the theory examined—Remark on the use made of documents in this argument—Confusion of Stade's argument; reasoning from history of other nations is begging the question; and for the rest, the argument is mainly based on a forced interpretation of metaphorical language—Popular superstition must be admitted everywhere, but its existence is no proof of the non-existence of a pure faith—A nature-God and a God of nature—A sure method of testing this precarious mode of reasoning; check metaphorical language by unambiguous expressions in the same composition, and appeal to books of earliest writing prophets.

A FAVOURITE line of argument to prove the low tone of the pre-prophetic religion is, that the God of the Hebrews was regarded by them as confined to, or inseparably linked to, their native land, just as the gods of the nations were the patrons and defenders of their territories.

Palestine, we are told, was not indeed the original seat of Jahaveh, as it was not the original home of Israel. His ori-

ginal abode was Mount Sinai, a mountain sacred of old time among Semitic peoples, from which He came with Israel when they emerged from the desert, fighting at the head of their armies till they subdued Canaan, and returning again to His ancient seat when the war was over. This is proved, as it is maintained, by the song of Deborah, one of the oldest compositions that have come down to us,[1] in which, in Wellhausen's words, Jahaveh "is summoned to come from Sinai to succour His oppressed people, and to place Himself at the head of His warriors."[2]

Let us try to picture to ourselves the situation which is here set before us. In a time of sore straits, when the tribes of Israel come to deadly grips with the armies of Sisera, in the north of Palestine, they find themselves with nothing but their own arms to rely upon. The only assurance of divine presence they have is the ark, the symbol or representation of Jahaveh, who continued to dwell on Sinai long after the Israelites had settled in Palestine.[3] They long for the direct help of their God. They summon Him, and He comes to their aid. What does all this mean? If they prayed to Him to come, they have already a pretty advanced idea of the power of a God so far distant to hear them and to interfere on their behalf. The truth is, the song says not a word of Jahaveh being "summoned" from Sinai on the occasion of the battle referred to. The only show of support for such an idea is to be found in an obscure expression in verse

[1] It is not safe, however, in these days, to assert anything as undisputed in regard to the dates of Hebrew documents; for quite recently we have been told that this song of Deborah, which "has been believed to be ancient, is, on the contrary, of very late date, and consequently unworthy of credence."—Maurice Vernes, Les Résultats de l'Exégèse Biblique, p. 21.

[2] Hist. of Israel, p. 344.

[3] Ibid.

13, which may be rendered, "Then a remnant of nobles (and of) the people did go down; the Lord went down to my help among the mighty" (Queen's Printer's Bible). As for the expressions near the beginning of the song (vv. 4, 5), they have no reference to Jahaveh being "summoned" from Sinai, but consist of a highly poetic description, to be placed side by side with the similar language in Ps. lxviii. 7, 8, of the manifestation of Jahaveh at Sinai. All such highly figurative expressions are most naturally to be understood as referring to the extraordinary transactions, in whatever sense we may understand them, that all tradition places in the time immediately succeeding the exodus—transactions to which the heart of the people would turn in every time of danger to give them trust in their covenant God. Nay, the expressions are such that Bertheau, in his commentary on the passage, concludes that Jahaveh's seat is to be understood, according to the popular belief which here finds utterance, not on Sinai, but on some mountain to the north or east of Palestine,—for it is said, "When Thou wentest forth out of Seir, when Thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, . . . even yon Sinai, at the presence of the Lord, the God of Israel." From this he reasons that the original abode of Jahaveh—in the popular conception — was elsewhere, and that the verses describe His removal to meet Israel as they came out of Egypt. However this may be, even if we admit that the popular conception embodied in the song made Sinai His peculiar dwelling-place, we cannot accept the view that Jahaveh is regarded by the author of this song as limited by space or time in the circumscribed way imputed to Him; but, on the contrary, we are bound to conclude that the poet looked upon Him as one whose

power could be exerted, as on Sinai, so in North Palestine, a land which He had not yet made His own, according to the theory. That this more exalted view is the only one in keeping with the tenor of the song, will, I think, be evident to one reading the whole piece, with its ever-recurring "Bless ye Jahaveh"; and its grand conclusion, "So let all thine enemies perish, O Jahaveh; but let them that love Him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." Whatever may have been the earliest conceptions entertained of Jahaveh, or the conceptions of the people generally at their lowest, the tribes of Israel must have had convictions based on experience of the power of their God to help them anywhere before a poet could have celebrated the events of that day in the strains here employed.

Another argument is drawn from the alleged fact that even in David's time Jahaveh's power to hear and to help was circumscribed by the boundaries of the Holy Land;[1] for David complains in regard to his enemies: "They have driven me out this day that I should not cleave unto [have no share in, *marg.*] the inheritance of Jahaveh, saying, Go, serve other gods" (1 Sam. xxvi. 19). The passage has been made a great deal of by most writers of the modern school. But they may be asked to explain the meaning of the same expressions, put even more strongly, in a book which belongs, according to them, to a period when the "ethic monotheism" had asserted itself. In Deuteronomy chap. xxviii., among the misfortunes threatened for disobedience of Jahaveh's law, it is said: "Jahaveh shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which thou hast not known, thou nor thy

[1] See Note XVIII.

fathers; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone" (v. 36): and again,—"Jahaveh shall scatter thee among all peoples, from the one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which thou hast not known, thou nor thy fathers, even wood and stone" (v. 64). This is surely as strong an expression of the idea that foreign countries were under the tutelary care of foreign divinities as the words of David. Whatever may have been the precise signification of such phrases to the minds of the ordinary people employing them (if they had a *precise* signification at all), we are not justified in concluding that in either of the passages they amounted to a belief that the power of Jahaveh ceased when His worshipper went beyond Palestine. David, in point of fact, was in the wilderness of Ziph, within the inheritance of Jahaveh, in that sense, when he used the words. And let the context in the book of Deuteronomy be noted. Immediately after the verse last quoted, follow the words: "And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, and there shall be no rest for the sole of thy foot; but Jahaveh shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and pining of soul," &c. (v. 65). Moreover, in chap. xxx. 1-3, we have the following: "It shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither Jahaveh thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto Jahaveh thy God, and shalt obey His voice, according to all that I command thee this day, . . . that then Jahaveh thy God will turn thy captivity, and have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from all the peoples,

whither Jahaveh thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine outcasts be in the uttermost parts of heaven, from thence will Jahaveh thy God gather thee," &c., &c. From all which we conclude that the "serving of other gods," which is made a necessary consequence of being driven out from the inheritance of Jahaveh, must be taken in a sense compatible with the belief that He has power to control the destinies of His outcast ones in their banishment, to hear their penitent cry, and to bring them again, in spite of their enemies and in spite of strange gods, to their own land. There is not a particle of proof that David thought his God would no longer be able to hear and help him when he was driven away from his own home; and there is explicit proof that the writer of the words in Deuteronomy, while employing expressions exactly like David's, held quite the opposite. And thus the refutation of this low view of the Davidic religion gives a very strong confirmation to the Biblical view, for it brings to light a conception in pre-prophetic Israel—at the time of the Judges even—of Jahaveh's power to hear and help, which we have no reason to believe other nations entertained of their gods. The instance brought forward by Renan[1] stands on a much lower level. A certain Salmsézab, in an inscription found at Teïma, in the heart of Arabia, not only stipulates his right to offer in a strange land sacrifices to his own god, whose priest he is, but desires that the gods of these strange countries, whose power he recognises, may be pleased with the sacrifices which he will offer to his own god, and regard them as offered to themselves. Moreover, he desires that the sacred place consecrated to his god may be under the protection of the gods of Teïma;

[1] Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, vol. i. p. 36.

he establishes and endows in a strange land the worship of his own god; and the gods of Teïma accept the stipulation, become guarantees for its performance, and accord their protection to Salmsézab. With this proceeding M. Renan compares the vow of Jacob at Beth-el, "If Jahaveh be with me, and keep me in the way that I go, . . . Jahaveh shall be my God, and this stone shall be Beth-Elohim:" and he adds,[1]—"Perhaps under the reign of Solomon there took place more than one convention of this kind. Perhaps even the temple of Solomon saw Tyrians sacrificing to Baal, with the pretension that these sacrifices were not disagreeable to Jahaveh."

All this is very different from anything we find in the actual documents. Jacob never mentions the gods of the strange land into which he is going, but considers the presence of his own God sufficient for protection and sustenance. And in Deuteronomy the God of the scattered Israelites is to be with them, inflicting chastisement, hearing their prayer, and bringing them back without any reference to the power of the heathen gods. As to what went on at Jerusalem in Solomon's time, the Biblical historians make no effort to conceal his doings; and notwithstanding the assertion to the contrary, we have very good reason for believing that his conduct did not pass without rebuke from the men of his own time. There is nothing to favour the view of Renan that an eclecticism of gods was the authorised or even the current religious practice of those times. On the contrary, as we have already seen that even in the most idolatrous times the people refrained from naming themselves after foreign gods, so also, wherever we find the worship of such gods mentioned, there is always the accompanying conscious-

[1] Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, vol. i. p. 38.

ness that they are foreign gods, and not the rightful objects of worship to the Israelites.

It is to be observed, however, that the argument as to the dwelling-place of deity is, in principle, much more than an attempt to prove Jahaveh's close association with Mount Sinai or the Holy Land. It is maintained that there are even more crude or elementary conceptions of the dwelling-place and energy of the national god, which prove clearly "that the pre-prophetic religion of Israel grew out of a blending of the Jahaveh religion with certain elements of an older animistic or fetishistic religion found on the west of the Jordan."[1] The ancient Israelite, says Stade, had no idea that God dwelt in heaven. If he is the god of the thunder and lightning, he might have been supposed to dwell above the clouds. But that view was not taken. He dwells on earth, although the views as to the precise place he inhabits are confused and contradictory. Along with the belief accepted by Israel in the adoption of the Jahaveh religion, that He had His dwelling on Sinai, is found the widespread belief that Jahaveh inhabits the sanctuaries of the land. It was a common belief among primitive peoples that the deity dwelt where he was worshipped, being confined in the temple, and that he left the sanctuary before it passed into the hands of an enemy. The belief, too, among ancient Israel amounted to this, that Jahaveh in His entireness inhabited each sanctuary. He was not held to be everywhere present, but He was to be found at these different sanctuaries.

Stade explains the origin of this belief by the fact that the sanctuaries in question were, before the Israelite conquest of Canaan, the abodes of different Canaanite *numina*,

[1] Stade, Geschichte, i. p. 446.

and that when the Jahaveh worship overcame the Canaanite religion, Jahaveh took possession of these holy places. And so it came about that the old Israelite, without feeling conscious of the contradiction to the Jahaveh religion which it involved, spoke of the "god of Dan" and the "god of Beersheba" (Amos viii. 14);[1] of the Jahaveh Shalom at Ophrah (Judges vi. 24); of the El who had revealed himself at Beth-el (Gen. xxxi. 13); as also of the One who appeared to Hagar (Gen. xvi. 13). And expressions used by the prophets, such as "the sin of Samaria" (Amos viii. 14), "the calf of Samaria" (Hosea viii. 5, 6), are just their mode of indicating what, in the popular language, would be "the god or Jahaveh of Samaria." Yea, the prophets not only do not fully break away from this old popular conception; they actually take it up in another form. They reprove the people, for example, for localising God at Beth-el, and so forth, but take it as a matter of course that He has His dwelling on Mount Zion at Jerusalem,[2] which was, as Ezekiel expresses it, the place of His throne and the place of the soles of His feet (Ezek. xliii. 7); and which, as that prophet believes, He forsook before the destruction of Jerusalem. How then was this dwelling of Jahaveh at different sanctuaries reconciled with the belief in His unity? In this way. The place was not considered sacred because Jahaveh dwelt there, but because He had once appeared there. This was the way that the priestly legend accounted for the existence and reverence of these sacred places, associating each of them with some theophany in the lives of the patriarchs or national heroes. So Hebron, Beersheba, Ophrah, Beth-el, Zion, had each its story connected with it of a manifestation of Jahaveh to

[1] Geschichte, i. p. 447. [2] Ibid., p. 448.

His favoured ones. But this mode of accommodation is contradicted by the usage of the ritual language which represents Jahaveh as located in the Temple of Jerusalem from the time that His ark was placed there. This localising of Jahaveh's presence at different sanctuaries is of course, Stade proceeds, opposed to the true Jahaveh religion. The God who had brought the people from Sinai was everywhere present, and could be worshipped everywhere; but in practice, and in point of fact, He was honoured only at particular places. The priestly account of the matter was, that He could be worshipped only at places where He had made His presence known, and even the book of the Covenant assumes the same thing (Exod. xx. 24). But as these sanctuaries were in existence before Israel came into the land, and as they coincided with certain prominent features of the country, we must conclude that the proposition, "Jahaveh is to be worshipped wherever He has made Himself known to the fathers," simply amounts to this: "Jahaveh is worshipped wherever He has in fact been believed to reside."

So then, Stade argues, the whole worship of ancient Israel comes under the category of the worship so much blamed by the prophets—viz., the worship of "the high places, under green trees." We have good grounds, he says, for concluding that every prominent situation had its *Bamah*, or high place, just as every good site in Christian countries has its church. The belief that the gods inhabit the hills is found among ancient Greeks, Romans, and Indians; and in no Semitic land is it more strikingly seen than in Palestine, in which a sacredness attaches to every mountain,[1] and in which we have quite a number of places named *Ramah, Mizpah, Gibeah*, all of a sacred

[1] Geschichte, i. p. 449 f.

character. It is a mistake to suppose that such places were the seats of an old astral or solar worship: they were old sacred places or seats of deity, and became sacred to Jahaveh after Israel passed into the country. The prophets call the old Israelite worship the worship of the high places, and the Syrians are made to say that the gods of the Hebrews are gods of the hills (1 Kings xx. 23).

To explain how this worship of the high places originated, Stade says it is to be noted that at these sacred places are found graves of patriarchs or other heroes. Thus Hebron was the burying-place of Abraham, and, according to later tradition, of the whole family of the patriarchs. In Shechem the bones of Joseph are placed; Kadesh-Barnea is associated with the oldest traditions of the tribe of Levi; and there Miriam is buried. We find also sacred *trees* at most of these places, or sacred *fountains*, as at Beersheba,[1] and sacred stones at Beth-el and elsewhere. And in these particulars there is a great resemblance to the legends attached to the graves of Greek heroes. The conclusion to which Stade comes from these indications is, that before there was an altar and offering of sacrifices to Jahaveh at Hebron and Shechem, for example, it had been a custom to make offerings at these places to the souls of the heroes whose names are associated with each place; and thus we obtain proof that the worship of ancestors was a primitive usage among the Hebrews.[2] The graves of ever so many of the

[1] Geschichte, i. p. 451.

[2] Stade ascribes to this custom as a social influence the formation of families into septs and then into tribes. The derivation of whole tribes from a common ancestor and the naming of them by his name thus rest, according to this view, on ancestral worship.

legendary personages are thus specially mentioned. The remarkable exception in the case of Moses, whose grave is not known, may be a silent protest against the worship of ancestors, which is opposed to the religion which Moses made known. Or it may be that he is less of a legendary character than others whose graves are known; although it is not to be concluded that every one whose grave is honoured is a legendary character.

A confirmation of the position now reached is found, Stade proceeds, in the proofs we have that trees, stones, and so forth, were also considered sacred objects among the ancient Hebrews. By the altars in the high places trees were planted, and pillars of wood and Maççebas of stone were set up; and these are condemned by the prophets as elements of the old false worship. The names given to the trees,—*ēlah, ēlôn; allah, allôn,*—though generally explained to mean terebinth and oak, have no doubt a trace of old animistic belief attached to them, for the *ēlah* or *allah* (according to the Masoretic pointing made to differ, but consonantally identical אלה) is no doubt the *nomen unitatis* of *ēl*, which has its plural *ēlîm*. The green tree, with its perennial life, was thus no doubt among the Hebrews, as among pagans, regarded as animated with the life of a *numen*. The reverence for sacred stones is no less remarkable. The stone at Beth-el is invested with sanctity and worshipped, and there are several such stones at Gilgal. Though all these again are explained as made sacred by some appearance of Jahaveh at the place where they are found, it is clear they are traces of old fetishistic worship. And the best proof of all is the story of the sacred ark itself, which cannot be regarded as different essentially from other sacred arks of a similar kind among Etruscans, Egyptians, Trojans, and Greeks,

which contained images or fetishes. For by the ancient Israelite, Jahaveh was supposed actually to dwell in the ark; and only in this way is explained the misfortune of the loss of the ark in the Philistine war, and the great care which David took to place it in a safe place at Jerusalem. The tradition that the ark contained two tables of stone undoubtedly rests on some fact, and this fact is that ancient Israel had such an ark with two actual stones—perhaps meteoric stones—connected with and representing the god of the storm. The priestly explanation here given, again, is perhaps a silent rebuke of the primitive fetish-worship, when it represents the stones as being the two tables of the law.

There is in this a great deal that is exceedingly ingenious. There is much also that is suggestive and valuable, from the point of view of the comparative study of religions, as showing how the religious sentiment finds expression for itself through the medium of language and forms. Thought is at all times limited and circumscribed when it sets itself to give expression to supersensible things; forms more or less crude, and language necessarily metaphorical, must be resorted to; and in this respect the development of religious thought must ever be the same among all peoples. We must, however, be careful, in reasoning from the outward forms in which such sentiments are expressed, to test our conclusions by actual facts, if they are available, showing the sense that underlay the forms. In Stade's reasoning, however, there is a great deal of debatable matter, not only in the bold inferences drawn, but in the statements of assumed fact. There is, moreover, such a display of erudition, such a combination of diverse materials, and piecing together of things that

stand far apart, that, unless we look into his argument somewhat closely, we shall be smothered in a mass of distracting particulars.

A remark may be made at the outset on the peculiar manipulation of the "sources" in this argument. Writers of Stade's school are never tired of repeating that written documents give us certain information only in regard to the period at which they are composed. They declare, at the same time, that we have no authentic written documents before the eighth or ninth century B.C. These documents, therefore, ought only to be taken as evidences of the religious conceptions of that period; and yet Stade relies on them for proof of the religious beliefs of Israel at the time of, and even long before the time of Moses. This he does, however, only when he finds elements giving countenance to his own theory; for the moment that a writer of this period gives his testimony to the Biblical theory, his evidence is discredited as a modern reading of old facts, or even a later interpolation of a redactor. To such straits are writers of this school reduced, that they have to employ discredited works to build up their own theory—reminding one of the Irish Board of Guardians who resolved first to build a new workhouse out of the materials of the old; and secondly, to allow the old workhouse to stand till the new one was erected. If those stories of the patriarchs and suchlike, which are here appealed to, are of value for determining the ideas of that early age, what becomes of the assertion that they are the late dressing up of historical events? If, strictly taken, they are merely the expression of the ideas of writers of the ninth century, we are as far as ever from reaching the early age. If, again, the argument is based on the forms of speech, it is another case of false

reasoning from metaphorical or mythological language, such as we saw in the last chapter.

To come, however, to Stade's argument, there seems to me to be some confusion in his reasoning. He asserts that the pre-prophetic religion of Israel grew out of a blending of the Jahaveh religion with elements of an older fetishistic kind found on the west of the Jordan;[1] and afterwards, in speaking of the localising of Jahaveh at the different sanctuaries, he says: "This localising of Jahaveh's presence at different sanctuaries is of course opposed to the true Jahaveh religion. The God who had brought the people from Sinai was everywhere present and could be worshipped everywhere; but in point of fact and in practice, He was honoured only at particular places."[2] Here it would seem to be implied that the lower animistic and fetishistic elements were found by Israel on their entrance into Canaan, and taken into the Jahaveh religion; and also that, whereas they had attained under Moses to the idea that God was everywhere present, yet on coming into the land of Canaan, they learned to localise Him. Stade thus seems inadvertently to admit the Biblical statement of the case—viz., that Israel in Canaan learned the ways of the Canaanites, and thereby fell away from their own God. He can scarcely, however, mean this, or imply that Israel, when they received the knowledge of Jahaveh, had no superstitions of their own, for his whole argument is led with a view of reaching the nature basis of the *pre-Mosaic* religion. It is strange, in this view, that he should have to come to Canaan for so much; and he ought to tell us clearly whether the process of development after Moses was a process of deterioration from the Jahaveh religion, or a

[1] Geschichte, i. p. 446. [2] Ibid., p. 449.

process of elimination of older animistic notions by the force of the new faith, or whether both processes went on simultaneously. No one doubts that the *popular* religion was deeply affected by contact with Canaanitish idolatry; nor need we ignore the tendency seen everywhere, even when a purer faith has been learned, to run into carnal and limited conceptions and modes of expression, and the cropping up everywhere in human history of the hard granite of underlying superstition. Stade himself, however, falls back upon the existence of a purer and better religion, made known in the time of Moses; and if this point is established, the Biblical theory is so far confirmed.

In the absence of direct historical evidence in regard to the earlier periods of Israel's history, Stade refers to the conditions under which tribes were formed among the ancient inhabitants of Greece and Rome, and the mode of growth of the pre-Islamic Bedawin tribes. Such comparisons are deeply instructive for the light they throw upon the manner in which the human mind comports itself when confronted with the problems of religion. Yet the history of the religious life of Israel is so unique that we have always to be on our guard against assuming for it precisely the same kind of development as is found in other nations. It may be that the religious phraseology of the Hebrews is exactly like that of polytheistic nations, though Renan, for example, would deny it; and it may be safe to infer that this similarity proves that the *primitive* notions of both were similar. But the question is, When was the primitive stage among the Hebrews? The first attempts of man to express conceptions of unseen things result in metaphor, and all religious language is metaphorical. But metaphorical language may be employed by a people long after they have passed beyond a primi-

tive stage of intelligence. We use to the present day, without being misled by it, phraseology full of anthropomorphisms, and speak of God in the very language employed in the earliest Hebrew writings. To take such phrases in the strictly literal sense, and to maintain that where they were employed by the Hebrews they had that sense, is to ignore the simplest laws of language, and to overlook the growth of reflection. Surely no one expects to find in the pre-prophetic period the abstractions and generalisations of the modern philosophy of religion. The very best of the prophets never moved in that direction; their conceptions of God may be said to be not so much excogitated as intuitively grasped, and they were content to employ the same phrases as had been employed from of old by men who could not have reached their lofty conceptions. Stade might have perceived that in referring to Ezekiel's belief that God left the Temple before Jerusalem was destroyed, he was refuting his own argument; or would he, for example, infer from the words in an exilian psalm, "How shall we sing Jahaveh's song in a strange land?" (Ps. cxxxvii. 4), that even at that late period the Israelites still believed that their national God was confined to Palestine? If the prophets of Israel ever attained to a conception of a God who was everywhere present, spiritual, and unique, they had attained it in Ezekiel's time in the captivity. To make this prophet hold the crude idea said to be held by pre-prophetic men, that the deity dwelt in a certain sanctuary in the limited sense described, is to reduce the whole reasoning to absurdity, and to make the tracing of development impossible.

It is no doubt true that certain places were to the ancient Israelite more sacred than others, and there can be

no doubt that superstitious reverence was paid by the ignorant and carnal-minded to places and things. We are not, however, inquiring as to the superstitions of the common people, but as to the truth that had been made known to the teachers and guides of the nation. For that matter, we have not yet outgrown a certain reverence for places associated with great historical or religious events, and what Stade calls the priestly tradition is just as likely, in the circumstances, to be a true account of the matter as the one which he gives. A people who already had, according to Stade's own admission, a knowledge of a God who was everywhere, and who could help anywhere, was quite likely to regard with special reverence such places as had been the scene of critical events, or striking displays of power; and this in itself was not and could not be reprobated. The transition, however, from pious association and veneration to superstitious regard, is very easy among an unreflecting people; and the same Biblical writers who record the events which made certain spots sacred, tell us also how these very places became the headquarters of idolatry. Had the prophets known that the worshippers of Jahaveh merely appropriated old heathen shrines, they would not have omitted to mention it. Neither do they give the least hint that the sacred places of the Hebrews were so regarded because they were originally the burial-places of Hebrew or Canaanite heroes, although the fact, if it were a fact, could scarcely have been without a trace in the national recollection.

Stade also makes a great deal of the awe felt by the Israelite at the thunder, which was God's voice, the importance attached to dreams, and so forth, taking all these as so many indications of a primitive nature-worship. But admitting here, also, the necessary imperfection of language

to express religious conceptions, and admitting that people of simple believing hearts used language of the most infantile character, it is to be observed that the feelings he speaks of are consistent with conceptions of God of a most spiritual kind. The beliefs of men like Lord Bacon and Sir Thomas Browne, not to mention others, should make us very careful in our reasoning here; and in point of fact, the "superstitions" even of the popular conceptions of Israel do not exceed those to be found in the Christian centuries. If, with the conviction that the God whom they worshipped controlled the world of nature as well as the world of man, the early Israelites heard His voice in the thunder, and trembled before His presence in the storm, why should we call this an old belief in a nature-God? It is quite as reasonable to call it an inborn belief in a God of nature; and there are yet not a few who believe in such a God, although Renan would persuade us that such a God is a fiction. If, again, they felt His presence particularly near in the silent night, and recognised His communings with their spirits in dreams, it is just as reasonable to regard these convictions as part of the human consciousness that man has a close relation to the unseen, as to say that they are remnants of a belief that every bush or tree or stone harboured a divinity. It is now, I think, admitted by the most sober students of anthropology, that even the lowest forms of fetishism rest upon and are the outcome of a recognition by the human spirit of a spirit above man and nature, and that the presence of crude conceptions or superstitious practices in the midst of a certain age does not by any means give the key to the understanding of that whole age. Christian countries form the best field for the study of the rudest and grossest superstitions. And if it be said that these are the traces

of an older naturalistic faith, the question arises, How old must they be if eighteen centuries of Christian civilisation have not rooted them out?[1] The main point is: their presence does not prove that a purer faith, a less superstitious religion, has not been taught and acknowledged at an earlier stage.

In the face of all that is advanced to prove the low stage of pre-prophetic religion in Israel, we may argue thus: Down to the close of Israel's national existence, we find a struggle going on between a spiritual religion and the most material conceptions; and, at the first appearance of written prophecy, we find the same, with reproof of the carnal-minded for falling away from a higher faith. Therefore the struggle may have been going on at a period long antecedent; at all events, it is not yet proved that it began with the prophets whose writings have come down to us. I believe that an unprejudiced view of all the evidence will lead to the conclusion that, as the existence of narrow and sensuous views is attested by historians and prophets alike, so history and prophecy are alike unintelligible without admitting the presence at the same time of a better and purer faith.

Finally, however, we have, it seems to me, a sure mode of testing the conclusions drawn on this precarious method of reasoning. If these animistic and fetishistic conceptions lingered on till the time of the Jahavist, and found embodiment in his stories, we ought to find clear indications of them in other writings that belong to about the same period, and to be able to test them by statements of a more decisive nature. Critical writers, it is true, do not give us much latitude in our selection of authorities.

[1] For some curious illustrations, see Arthur Mitchell's 'The Past in the Present' (1880).

Still we have some undoubted productions of the time, or near it, when these nature conceptions are said to have been prevalent; and if we find in them a mode of speaking and thinking which is opposed to the theory, we are entitled to check the lower by the higher, and to accept the Biblical account that by the time in question a knowledge of a much higher kind had been attained. Take the song of Deborah itself. Not only does it give no countenance to the modern view, unless by a strained turning of exalted poetic diction into flat prose, but its whole tenor and tone show that the tribes at that time had a much worthier conception of their national God. Modern critics will scarcely admit any psalm to have come from David; but there is one, the 18th, having its counterpart in 2 Sam. xxii., which is often appealed to in support of the low tone of pre-prophetic religion, and which most critics would accept as genuine. This psalm, as has just been hinted, contains some highly figurative and poetical language (vv. 6-16), which has been eagerly seized upon to show that at the time the psalm was composed Jahaveh was regarded as a nature-God, riding upon a cherub, breathing forth fire and smoke, shooting forth lightnings as arrows from His bow, and so forth. But the psalm contains also language of a less poetical and more unequivocal character, and it is surely safe criticism to interpret the more obscure by the light of the more evident. It may be put to any one of sober sense whether the expressions that occur in verses 16 and onwards are compatible with the theory we are considering. There is here no difficulty in seeing the standpoint of the writer: "As for God, His way is perfect: the word of Jahaveh is tried; He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him. For who is God save Jahaveh? or who is a rock save

our God?" (vv. 30, 31). Such expressions cannot be toned down into a belief in a mere storm-God; on the contrary, those other expressions, of a highly poetical kind must be taken to be in harmony with this higher tone, and therefore given up as proofs of an animistic or fetishistic character of religious conception at this period.

Then we have the books of the earliest writing prophets, Amos and Hosea; and Stade actually tries to base an argument for his theory on statements of these prophets, although he positively rejects their testimony to a purer faith in the times before them. And what does his argument from Amos amount to? The prophet speaks of the God of Dan and the God of Beersheba (viii. 14); and therefore it was part of the acknowledged religion of that time to regard the Deity as localised at various centres. Now it is to be noticed that Amos, in the passage appealed to, is reproving those who use such expressions as apostate, showing, no doubt, that the popular conception was at fault, but giving no proof that this aberration represented the accepted religion. And then, as to the prophets having carried over the localising tendency, and confined Jahaveh's residence to Jerusalem, it may be put to any sane person whether the prophet, who opens his book with the words, "Jahaveh shall roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem" (Amos i. 2), and who also ascribes to Jahaveh the bringing of the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir, as well as the Israelites from Egypt (Amos ix. 7), could possibly have thought of Jahaveh as confined within a chest in the Temple, or even limited to Jerusalem as a dwelling-place; or whether the prophet Isaiah, who saw "Jahaveh sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple" (Isa.

vi. 1), had not yet got beyond a bodily conception of Israel's God.

If, then, witnesses on whom we rely, clearly hold different conceptions from those ascribed to men who are almost their contemporaries, we must either conclude that the lower views, if they are proved to be there, are not to be taken as held by the best of the nation, or that they are wrongly ascribed to those to whom they are imputed. Seeing that the higher views are expressed in the actual words of the Biblical writers, while the lower are only inferred from doubtful expressions or metaphorical language, a sober criticism must reject the inference which Stade would draw. Moreover, when Stade finds the most primitive conceptions existing side by side with the most advanced ideas, one is disposed to ask what is the value of all the critical processes which profess to be able to separate the component parts of our documents, and to assign the different elements to different periods on the ground of the development of thought which they exhibit? Even if we considered that he had successfully proved that these notions of an animistic or fetishistic character are fairly deducible from the so-called Jahavistic source, seeing that they are so divergent from the conceptions of the writing prophets, the conclusion, on critical grounds, ought to be that these stories of the Jahavist are much older than the eighth century. Stade thinks himself capable of determining on grounds of higher and lower tone in speaking of Jahaveh, that the stories of the patriarchs, being of milder aspect, are later than those of the book of Judges. How much earlier, on his own mode of reasoning, ought both to be than the writings of Amos and Hosea!

CHAPTER IX.

PRE-PROPHETIC RELIGION CONTINUED—VISIBLE REPRESENTATIONS OF THE DEITY.

The calf-worship considered, as to the source from which it came, and as to the regard in which it was held—Arguments of Vatke and Kuenen from history and from prophetical books—Elijah and Elisha—Amos—Dr Davidson's statement—Argument drawn from the ephod—Meaning of the word, and its alleged use to signify an image—Gideon's ephod—Micah and the Danites—Vatke's account of the ephod—Kuenen's contradictory accounts—The whole argument uncertain—Stade's pruning-knife—"An altar in the land of Egypt and a pillar by its border"—A passage in Hosea examined.

We have next to consider the proofs brought forward to show that the Israelites, like the neighbouring nations, were in the habit of making visible representations of their national God, and considered it no aberration from their ancestral faith to do so. On this line of argument, reliance is particularly placed upon such facts as the practice of calf-worship, the use and veneration of the ephod, and various considerations drawn from the prophetical and historical writings. These we must therefore consider in detail.

I. As to the calf-worship, Kuenen says confidently: "Jahveh was worshipped in the shape of a young bull. It may not be doubted that the bull-worship was really the

worship of Jahveh."[1] The account given of the making of the golden calf in the wilderness (Exod. xxxii. 8, 23), and the setting up of calves in the northern kingdom (1 Kings xii. 28), show plainly enough that there was something in this form or accompaniment of worship, which not only did not shock the religious sense of the mass of the people, but even commended itself to them as fitting and lawful. The question is, Was it part and parcel of the ancestral faith and worship, to such a degree that the preservers of the true Jahaveh tradition saw in it no defection from the severity of that religion? To arrive at a solution of this question, we must inquire, (*a*) on the one hand, from what source the calf-worship came —whether, that is to say, it is a remnant of old pre-Mosaic or even pre-Abrahamic superstition cropping up at a later time, or whether it came along with and as part of the Israelite belief in Jahaveh, or finally, whether it was borrowed and incorporated into their own religion from the religion of some other people; and (*b*) on the other hand, whether it is formally approved of or not reprobated by those who in the most special manner stood forth as representatives of the true Jahaveh worship.

(*a*) As to the origin of the calf-worship, there is much to be said in favour of the view that the Israelites became familiar with it in Egypt, and brought it with them as an inheritance of degradation from that country. The Old Testament writers do not say that it was borrowed from Egypt—indeed they do not tell us whence it came—but there remain the two facts, that it appeared first in the history immediately after the exodus, and that Jeroboam I., who set it up in the northern kingdom, had lived for some time in Egypt and had a patron in the Pharaoh of

[1] Relig. of Israel (Eng. tr.), vol. i. p. 235.

his time. Moreover, we find even as late as Ezekiel the firm tradition of an early corruption of Israelite faith with the superstitions of Egypt. In several passages that prophet speaks of the "idols of Egypt" (xx. 7, 8) as having had a sinister influence on Israel at the time of the exodus; and of the whoredoms in Egypt committed in the nation's youth (xxiii. 3, 8, 19, 21). In the same way, in the parting address of Joshua, the gods which their fathers served beyond the river are classed with those which they served in Egypt as corruptions to be put away (Josh. xxiv. 14). It is true that in these passages the worship of the calf or the ox is not expressly mentioned; but when it is remembered that the city of On, in which the ox Mnevis was worshipped, lay in Goshen or on its borders,[1] the coincidence of the appearance of the calf-worship immediately after the exodus[2] with these references to Egyptian idolatry, is very striking and suggestive. Gramberg, for example, who derived the calf-worship from Egypt, explained its prevalence in Israel after this fashion: The worship of Apis, once borrowed by a people prone to a visible cultus, maintained itself all along as a private and unofficial worship, side by side with the ritual connected with the ark. Jeroboam, seeing that the Jerusalem Court had possession of the ark, and that the Temple ritual had no image, made the worship of Jahaveh Apis the official cultus in his new state, this arrangement being favoured by the fact that Dan

[1] Ebers in Riehm's Handwörterbuch, Art. On, p. 1111 f. Comp. p. 529, Art. Gosen.

[2] It may be observed in passing, that modern critics, as a rule, find no difficulty in accepting as a historical fact the making of the golden calf in the desert, although they will not admit that the tabernacle was also made in the wilderness. Kuenen is consistent in saying (Rel. Isr., i. p. 235) "it is doubtful whether the bull-worship in the desert is historical."

was already the seat of an image-worship of Jahaveh, though not perhaps of the calf-worship.[1] There is the obvious objection to this theory, that a people just delivered from bondage to a foreign yoke was not likely to set up as a symbol of the God that delivered them the very image of the god of their oppressors. Moreover, although the Egyptians carried about images of bulls in sacred processions, yet the object of their veneration was a live bull, Apis. The difficulty indeed is so great, that we are rather led to believe that the calf, whatever else it was to Israel, was not the actual symbol of any Egyptian deity, but was adopted as a distinctive symbol of their own god by a people whose religious sense had been so utterly debauched by residence in Egypt, that they considered *some* visible representation of the deity necessary. Their long sojourn among a people whose religious service was so overlaid with symbolism and imagery could not have been without its effect in this direction; just as there are in the ritual and other laws of the Hebrews very striking resemblances to the customs of Egypt—in the Urim and Thummim, for example.

The readiness, nay eagerness, with which the people in the desert accepted the golden calf as the symbol of the God that had brought them out of Egypt, the ease with which the worship of the calves was introduced by Jeroboam, and the fact that in both cases a calf or young bull was taken as a symbol, are thought by some to have a deeper root. The golden calf in the desert could scarcely have been a sudden thought; and we must either think of Israel having become thoroughly impregnated with Egyptian idolatrous notions, or having even in their own blood, so to speak, a leaning in that direction.

[1] Gramberg, Krit. Gesch. d. Religionsideen des A. T. (1829), i. p. 444.

It is still more difficult to explain Jeroboam's step as a simple imitation of the gods of Egypt. He could hardly, one would think, have appealed to Aaron's act as a precedent; although, indeed, the people in the desert is represented as using the same language as Jeroboam (comp. Exod. xxxii. 4, 8, with 1 Kings xii. 28). Nor could his action have well commended itself to the acceptance of a people who had ceased to have sympathy with such visible representations of the deity from the time of the exodus. Hence some of the soberer critics of modern times[1] believe that the representation of the deity in this form was an old Hebrew idea, or one of those ideas common to the Hebrews, with their Semitic kindred and other nations. Against this view it may be urged that in the stories of Abraham and the other patriarchs there is no reference to calf or ox worship as remaining elements of pre-Abrahamic religion, although teraphim are mentioned as remaining in the family of Jacob. Yet since Abraham is represented as coming forth from an idolatrous land, since the symbolism of bulls was common in Assyria, and since the Israelites took to this form of representation so easily, there is a good deal of support for the view that it rests on an old inherent conception.

We must not ignore the fact that there is ever in the human mind a craving for visible forms to express religious conceptions; and history shows that this tendency does not disappear with the acceptance nor even with the constant recognition of pure spiritual truth. We need not be astonished at Israel, at the time in question, manifesting the tendency, nor charge them with a crass materialistic idolatry in so doing. They wished, let us suppose, to have

[1] See their names in König's Hauptprobleme, p. 57, from which, also, a good deal of what is here stated is derived.

a visible representation of strength, and they could not picture the abstract idea of *Abir*, Mighty, in a more obvious manner than by an image of the *Abbir*, the powerful Ox.[1] That it was an image of an ox, and not of a human being (although they used the most marked anthropomorphic language in speaking of God) is to me a strong reason for supposing that the calf or ox was not meant to be an actual image, but only a symbol, of God. Does not, indeed, the making of such images, as unlike as possible to the form in which deity can be conceived, prove that the initial impulse to image-making rests on a more spiritual recognition of the Godhead? It is only when the instinctive impulse has stilled down, and the mass of ignorant people rest in forms, that the εἰκών becomes a charm or even a god. Baudissin says:[2] "As the great and mighty of the earth are often represented under the figure of an ox, and as especially the horn of the ox is an image of strength, so the latter image is not disdained as a representation of the power and salvation proceeding from Jahaveh;" and this consideration may furnish at least some explanation of the ideas on whose awakening in the hearts of the common people those who introduced the calf-worship could count as auxiliaries in its adoption.[3]

This view, however, differs widely from that which some of the more advanced critics of the history have put forward—viz., that the calf or ox worship was part of the authorised Mosaic Jahaveh religion. On either of the suppositions that the calf-worship was borrowed from Egypt, or that it was a primitive inherent tendency, there is no inconsistency with the Biblical theory, which traces idol-

[1] See above, chap. vii. p. 188.

[2] Herzog-Plitt, Realencyklopädie, vii. p. 395 f., Art. Kalb.

[3] So König, Hauptprobleme, p. 58.

atry to Egypt, and also declares that the "fathers" of Israel before Abraham served other gods. But the idea that the calf-worship is really part, or the same as, the worship of Jahaveh, is quite opposed to the view of prophets and historians. We must, therefore, examine its claims more closely.

(*b*) We shall look presently at those formal statements of prophetic writers which are urged in support of the position. In the meantime we turn to the considerations drawn from history which are said to warrant it. Vatke's general line of argument is, that Moses could not have forbidden Israel to represent Jahaveh in visible form; because even the ark of the covenant with its cherubim must have led to such visible representation; because the prohibition of images in the Decalogue is a later outgrowth of the polemic against idol-worship, a result of the gradual and later perception of the spiritual nature of God; and because the absence of opposition to idol-worship which we find even in late times is a proof that Moses could never have prohibited it.[1] Kuenen argues very much on the same lines.[2] "The priests and worshippers of the golden bull," he says, "believed that they were worshipping Jahaveh Himself. Jeroboam I., too, the founder of the temples at Dan and Beth-el, calls the image made by him, 'Thy [Israel's] God, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt;' had it been possible to interpret the golden bull as a symbol of another deity, the narrator who tells us this detail would not have described it as a representation of Jahveh." Then, after rejecting the idea that the calf-worship was borrowed from Egypt, he says:[3] "It is much more reasonable to suppose that

[1] Vatke, Biblische Theologie (1835), pp. 233-235, 266-272, 398, 403, 483.
[2] Relig. of Israel (Eng. tr.), vol. i. p. 235. [3] Ibid., p. 236.

the ten tribes, who rebelled against Solomon's extortions, and his leaning towards foreign manners and customs, introduced a genuinely national and ancient Israelitish worship. For this reason, therefore, it is very probable that Jahveh had already been worshipped under the same form during the period of the Judges."[1] He then proceeds to refer to the symbols in and around the temple, which "remind us of the bull-worship, and are evidently related to it," the four *horns* of the great altar, and the twelve *oxen* supporting the brazen sea or laver. Elsewhere[2] he argues that the belief that Jahaveh Himself was present in the ark gives another proof that he was regarded as cognisable by sense. He also shares Vatke's view that the prohibition of image-worship in the Decalogue comes in awkwardly,[3] breaking the connection of the words, and thus betraying itself as a late addition; and in confirmation, he refers to the making of the brazen serpent, which was worshipped down to the days of Hezekiah.

But all these considerations are singularly inadequate to bear the weighty inferences based upon them. The cherubim, whatever else they may have been, are never hinted at as representations of Jahaveh, who "sits above" them. And the idea that the Deity was believed to reside in the ark is one of those precarious inferences from an old presumed animistic belief, which are not warranted by any positive evidence to be drawn from the documents. As to the prohibition of image-worship in the second commandment, this would most likely suggest itself to a lawgiver in the position of Moses, in view of the idolatrous practices of the heathen nations,

[1] So also Duhm, Theol. d. Propheten, p. 47, Anm. 4.

[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 233.

[3] Ibid., p. 287.

and even Kuenen will hardly deny that Moses had attained to the notion of a spiritual God. For in one passage,[1] after saying that Moses may have shared in the ideas of a somewhat sensuous character held as to the ark, he says if Moses believed that the ark was the abode of Jahaveh, and accordingly offered the common sacrifices before it,

"then he himself certainly did not erect an image of Jahveh, much less ordain the use of one. We are inclined to go a step further. May we not conclude from the fact that Moses attached so much importance to the ark, that the images of Jahveh did not fully harmonise with his conception of Jahveh's nature and character? If he had really received a deep impression of Jahveh's majesty, and of the vast difference between Him and the 'other gods,' is it not extremely natural that he should not have been altogether satisfied with the image of the bull, which was immediately connected with the usual nature-worship, and led men again and again to sink into it? The conclusion is easily drawn. Moses did not definitely and expressly forbid the use of Jahveh images. But still less did he promote it. He even opposed it indirectly by raising the ark to be Israel's central sanctuary. The prohibition, 'thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,' was not decreed by him, but at a much later period, although it was done in conformity with his spirit."

One would think that this was an ample admission that image-worship is not of Mosaic origin, and therefore not a part of the genuine Jahaveh religion. As for the brazen serpent, Kuenen himself does not lay much stress on it, for on his view the account of it cannot be accepted as historical; and even if the Israelites paid reverence to it, this does not prove that Moses, if he made it, set it up for that purpose. The argument drawn from the symbolism about the Temple fails also to establish the point, for it is confronted by one hard fact which makes

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 289 f.

for the opposite conclusion. Both Vatke and Gramberg admit that one great feature distinguishing the worship of Jerusalem from that of the northern kingdom was the absence from the Temple of any image of Jahaveh. The fact is the more significant that so much symbolism did exist, and seems to emphasise the point conceded above by Kuenen, that Moses did not promote image-worship. Kuenen also admits[1] that the ark stood where an image of Jahaveh should have stood, but does not pretend that there was any attempt to erect such an image. On the contrary he says, "We are nowhere told that Jahveh was worshipped under any visible form in the Temple at Jerusalem; it is much more likely that from the very beginning that Temple was dedicated to the service of the invisible Jahveh."[2] He tries indeed to make out that such images existed at other places where Jahaveh was worshipped. "The same prophets," he says, "whose complaints of the heathen practices of their countrymen we have just noticed, testify at the same time to the fact that Jahveh was universally honoured and served. Thus it is very possible, and even probable, that some of these graven images, the use of which they deplored, were images of Jahveh."[3] Wellhausen also says plainly,[4] that "images of the deity were exhibited in all the three places (viz., Jerusalem, Beth-el, and Dan), and indeed in every place where a house of God was found." In this they are practically following Vatke, who reasoned,[5] from Isa. ii. 8, that if the land of Judah was full of idols, the idol-worshippers could not have omitted from their list the greatest or one of the greatest of their gods, Jahaveh himself. It is a mere guess, destitute of any

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 236. [2] Ibid., p. 80. [3] Ibid., p. 80.
[4] Hist. of Israel, p. 406. [5] Bibl. Theol., p. 483.

proof, and, in face of the striking fact in regard to the Temple, it is in the highest degree improbable. We should, on Vatke's reasoning, have concluded that if Jahaveh was to be represented freely by an image at local shrines, *a fortiori* he would be so represented in the Temple. Only, the facts are against this reasoning, and much reasoning of a like kind.

But it is said there are direct positive proofs that a worship of Jahaveh by visible images was common and recognised by the best authorities. Of such proofs one is the passage in the book of Judges, in which a grandson of Moses is mentioned as exercising idolatrous priestly functions at Dan. To this we shall recur immediately in speaking of the ephod. Let us now look at other proofs based upon the practices of the prophets themselves or to be deduced from their writings.

It is maintained by the modern critics that, as in the legends of Elijah and Elisha we find no mention of a polemic against the calf-worship of the northern kingdom, we may take that as an indication that these prophets did not look upon it as inconsistent with the true Jahaveh religion. As for the words of Ahijah the Shilonite, whom the writer of Kings introduces as denouncing Jeroboam for making "other gods and molten images" (1 Kings xiv. 9), these are set down as "the dressing up of the pragmatic view of a later age"; and the imprecation of the unnamed prophet introduced in the same book (chap. xiii. 1 ff.) is easily got rid of for a similar reason. Letting these references pass, however, as contained in a book written long after the time to which we confine ourselves, we take the admission of Vatke that the legends of the prophets Elijah and Elisha are, comparatively speaking, correct. Now the absence

from them of all polemic against the calves may be admitted to be a very striking circumstance, since it is the case that such polemic formed a prominent and constant element of prophetic preaching.[1] But in the first place, there were many abuses in the northern kingdom about which we hear nothing from Elijah and Elisha. It is certainly remarkable that we do not find either of these prophets at Beth-el or Dan, the seats of the calf-worship, where we might naturally have expected them, had they regarded these as the seats of the true Jahaveh-worship of the time. The fact of their keeping aloof from these places, and forming perhaps, as many have supposed, centres of religious activity around which the piously minded of their nation could gather and keep clear of the prevailing contamination, would tell against the idea that they recognised the worship of Jeroboam's sanctuaries as genuine. But above all, these prophets had even a harder duty to perform than to rebuke the calf-worship. That worship, degraded as it was, *called itself* a worship of Jahaveh, and, from Jeroboam's days, may have kept the recognition of the national God of Israel in a way prominently before the people. But in the days of Ahab and his queen Jezebel, when Elijah flourished, it came to be a question whether Jahaveh or the Phœnician Baal was to receive recognition as the national god. To this great question Elijah braced himself, and sought to rouse the undivided co-operation of every Israelite. When once that danger passed away, we see his successors directing themselves to the purification of the Jahaveh religion, which had gained the day. The two crises are very much like those which Europe passed through in its religious history—first the struggle as to whether the Crescent or

[1] Vatke, Bibl. Theol., p. 400 f.

the Cross should be the recognised symbol of superiority, and then the Reformation of religion from its own abuses in the sixteenth century. For, as has just been said, the earliest writing prophets[1] are found denouncing the calf-worship as vigorously as Elijah rebuked the worship of Baal. It is not even denied, it cannot well be denied, by the most advanced writers that Hosea at least takes up this attitude to the worship of the calves; and his position is so well marked in this respect that modern critical writers beat about the bush, but in vain, for any adequate explanation of this advance over the non-writing or acting prophets who immediately precede him. All they are able to suggest is, that in the course of the centuries succeeding Jeroboam I. idolatrous elements had got incorporated with the primitive Jahaveh calf-worship — elements such as the "kissing" of the images referred to in Hosea xiii. 2, 1 Kings xix. 18—or that the worship of Jahaveh and the idols had got freely combined.[2] This mode of evading the difficulty is of a piece with the explanation why Amos and Hosea have left writings while none of the prophets before them wrote anything, that "in the course of a century a non-writing had developed into a literary age." The contrast is too sharp to be slurred over in this way. From all that is recorded of Elijah, we may more reasonably conclude that if he does not wage polemic against the calves, it is because his polemic was directed against much more than that form of idolatry.

In regard to Amos a very singular position has been taken by many modern writers. Since this prophet does

[1] Amos iv. 4, v. 5, vii. 9 ff., viii. 14; Hosea viii. 5, xiii. 2.

[2] See Vatke, p. 401 f.; Kuenen, Relig. of Israel, i. 78 f.; Stade in his Ztsch. für die ATliche Wissenschaft, 1883, p. 9 f.

not expressly reprobate the calf-worship, it has been taken for granted that he too, like Elijah, saw nothing wrong in it. This view, says Dr A. B. Davidson, has been repeated so often,[1] that it may be called traditional; and I will allow Dr Davidson in his own way to exhibit its superficiality. "It is questionable," he says, "if this representation be true, even in the letter. Several passages are hard to reconcile with it, as this: 'When I visit the transgressions of Israel upon him I will also visit the altars of Beth-el; and the horns of the altar shall be cut off, and fall to the ground' (iii. 14);[2] or the ironical invitation, 'Go to Beth-el, and transgress' (iv. 4); or this, 'They that swear by the sin of Samaria (probably the calf of Beth-el), and that swear, As thy God, O Dan, liveth, shall fall, and never rise up again (viii. 14); or the graphic picture of the worshippers gathered together in the temple at Beth-el, which Jehovah smites and brings down upon their heads. These passages appear to carry in them a formal repudiation of the calves. Minds may differ, but if the prophet's language be not a verbal protest against the calf-worship, it is because it is a great deal more; it is a protest which goes much deeper than the calves, and is directed to something behind them. The calves and the whole ritual service as it was practised, were but symptoms of that which gave offence to the prophet, which was the spirit of the worship, the

[1] See, *e.g.*, Cheyne on Hosea (Cambridge Bible for Schools), p. 31; Robertson Smith, Prophets, p. 175; Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 579.

[2] Shall we conclude, perhaps, from iii. 14, where the horns of the altar are to be cut off, that in the view of Amos the altar itself is to be allowed to stand? Wellhausen reasons in this way from a passage of Isaiah, where molten and graven images are condemned, that the local sanctuaries in which these are contained are not to be included in the condemnation.—Wellh., Hist., pp. 25, 46. See below, chap. xvii. p. 450.

mind of the worshippers, the conception of the Deity which they had in worshipping, and to which they offered their worship."[1]

II. Let us see now the argument drawn from the use of the ephod. It is argued that the word ephod, besides being employed to denote the breast-covering of the priest, was also the name of an image, and that such an image was set up by Gideon at Ophrah, and used by David for worship. It is certainly at the first sight remarkable, if this be the case, that the same word should denote two things so very different, and it is important to determine if possible which of the two significations is the primary one, and how one word could have come to have the two senses. There is one passage (Isa. xxx. 22) in which a derivative of the word ephod (*'aphuddah*) is applied not to the dress of the priest, but to some part of an image; and the use of that word will perhaps guide us to the truth. In that verse we read: "Ye shall defile the overlaying of thy graven images of silver, and the plating (*'aphuddath*) of thy molten images of gold" (R.V.) Here the parallelism shows that the word in question does not denote the image itself, but a part of it, answering in the other half of the verse to "overlaying." If we render this word "coating," it would be an obvious derivative of ephod in the sense of "coat" or dress. In fact the same derivative is used (Exod. xxviii. 6 ff.), when directions are given for the making of the priestly ephod. It was to be of "gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen, the work of the cunning workman;" and (in ver. 8) it is directed that "the curious girdle of the ephod [according to A.V., or, as better expressed in R.V., the cunningly woven band], which is

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 175.

upon it, shall be of the same." The ephod here described was evidently of rich material, provided with a girdle for tying it, and the verb from which the noun comes is actually employed (Exod. xxix. 5) to denote the girding on of the dress. Vatke, indeed, endeavoured to make out[1] that as, on his view, the whole account of the arrangements for the giving of the oracle by the high priest is late, we cannot draw the conclusion that the ephod was originally and exclusively part of the priestly dress. But he has himself to admit that the wearing of a linen ephod is distinctly mentioned in the books of Samuel, where we have the boy Samuel (1 Sam. ii. 18), a whole company of priests at Shiloh (1 Sam. xxii. 18), and David, who was not a priest (2 Sam. vi. 14), wearing ephods. Therefore in none of the passages quoted — not even that from Isaiah—is the word applied to an image as such, though it may be applied to the covering, with which, in the form and with perhaps an imitation of the magnificence of the priestly ephod, an image might be overlaid.

But it is said that the ephod placed by Gideon in his city Ophrah (Judges viii. 27) could have been nothing but an image, for it was made of the gold that was taken from the Midianites. In the first place, however, we are told that "the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside the crescents, and the pendants, and the purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks." Here, though the weight of gold is certainly great, there is also *purple raiment* that was on the kings, employed along with the metal in providing the ephod. I do not know that we are bound to conclude that every ounce of the gold and every inch of

[1] Bibl. Theol., p. 270, Anm.

the purple was employed in the actual construction of the ephod. Whatever was made, was a thing of magnificence, and implied costly surroundings; but it is not by all this proved that ephod means an image. It may have been merely a coat of extraordinary magnificence, so heavy that it could stand alone, as we say; it may have been placed upon an image; but it was an ephod, and an ephod, as far as the usage of the language tells us, was a coat or covering. The statement that follows may, of course, be taken as the remark of the pious narrator of a later time, that it became a snare; but there must be truth in his words that Israel went a-whoring after it—viz., that it was sought after as a religious instrument. The snare may have been this: As the ephod was the dress of the priest, and as the priest wearing it gave forth utterances for the guidance of the people, the superstition of the time may have supposed that from such a magnificent ephod, kept by a man like Gideon, who still desired that Jahaveh directly should rule over Israel (viii. 23), guidance would be given in cases of difficulty. We are not bound to make Gideon a man of perfect understanding of such things; he may have thought that his ephod was as good at least, and able to furnish as good guidance, as those employed at the decaying sanctuary of Shiloh. The only point we are concerned with now is to show that the ephod was not an image representing the national God of Israel. Some more light is thrown on this subject by the story of Micah (Judges xvii., xviii.) In that story we read that besides the "graven image and the molten image" the "man Micah had an house of gods, and he made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest." Here also the ephod may be—most probably is—nothing else than the priestly dress. The anxiety of Micah to

have a regularly qualified Levite to be his priest comes out at every step in the narrative; and the confidence both on his part and on the part of the Danites that such a priest would give unerring guidance, is quite childlike (chaps. xvii. 10-13; xviii. 4-6, 19, 24, 30). As the priest was the wearer of the ephod, the providing of an ephod necessitated the procuring of a priest. For want of a better, Micah sets apart his son to perform the priestly functions, but as soon as he can lay hands on a genuine Levite he instals him into the office; and the direction sought from him by the Danites is exactly the kind of guidance which the priest wearing an ephod was in the habit of giving. In any case we should not, of course, take Micah and the wandering Danites as the representatives of the true Jahaveh religion even in that rude age, nor regard the conduct even of Gideon as justifiable. Yet we do not find in these passages any proof that the ephod was taken to be a symbol of Jahaveh, even by Micah with his house of gods, much less that Gideon regarded his ephod, whatever its shape, as the embodiment of the national God who had made him victorious over the Midianites. In connection with the story of Micah, it is mentioned (xviii. 30) that "Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons, were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land" [or of the ark]. It is well known that the name Manasseh has been produced in this passage by the insertion of a letter to disguise the fact that the name was originally Moses. And much has been made of the fact that a grandson of the lawgiver himself is here represented as at the head of the idolatrous worship of the Danites—a proof, as it is taken to be, that there was nothing in the original Mosaic religion opposed to the practice of image-worship. Not only so; but the

case of this misguided youth, though it is specially noted, and though it occurred in a degenerate time, is made an example of the rule that was common throughout the land. So Robertson Smith says:[1] "In many places a priesthood, claiming kinship with Moses, administered the sacred oracle as his successors." It seems to me that this whole story of the Danites is given by the historian not because it was a sample of what was common, but because there was something uncommon and abnormal in the proceeding. The various judges whose exploits are recorded are not specimens of the ordinary Israelite of this period, nor were men all up and down the country killing multitudes with the jawbone of an ass, and routing hordes of Midianites with lamps and trumpets. And why go so far afield as Dan, if the writer wished to tell us what was done in Moses' name, and by his authority? Dan was in historic time the seat of a worship which was particularly obnoxious and vigorously denounced by the prophets; and the writer of the story in the book of Judges traces the idolatry back to the time at which it was set up, and perhaps, in giving the name of Moses' grandson, hints at one reason why it had its evil prestige—viz., that it could boast of the priesthood of men of Mosaic descent. So far from taking these incidents as types of the everyday life and action of the nation, I would be disposed to think that the writer, like most early writers, singled out for record things that were uncommon, leaving ordinary events unrecorded. The very things in regard to which we search the Old Testament in vain for information, are precisely those that must have been so regular that they were not thought worthy of notice.

I do not think it will commend this view of the ephod

[1] Prophets, p. 38.

to the ordinary reader of the Bible to be told, as Vatke tells us, that Gideon's ephod had "probably the form of an ox, or that of a combination of an ox and a man;"[1] and also that David's ephod "had in all probability also the form of an ox."[2] The ephod symbolism is, no doubt, found connected with the calf-worship, although in the mention of the calves there is not a word about the ephod, nor is there any hint of Gideon having got the idea of his ephod from Egypt or elsewhere. But if David used an ephod which was in the form of an ox, it is difficult to see in what respect Jeroboam's setting up of calves should have been a deviation from normal Israelitish worship, or even a distinction of the northern kingdom. There recurs again the admitted fact that in Solomon's temple there was no image of Jahaveh; and it is simply incredible that Solomon should have made such an advance upon his father David without the writer's ever giving the least hint of it. The evidence in support of this view of the ephod cannot be very strong, since Kuenen gives two divergent accounts of it. Thus at one place[3] he says it is "very probable" that Jahaveh had been worshipped under the form of a bull during the period of the Judges, and gives references for the statement to these cases of Gideon and Micah (Judges viii. 27, xvii. 4). And this view is adopted in his later work, 'National Religions,' in which he says,[4] "The old records themselves make it probable that the ephod was an *image of Jahveh*, silvered or gilt over, and perhaps so constructed that the lots could be concealed within it." In the same place, however, he gives a reference to his earlier work,[5] where this very view is "decidedly to be rejected," and the opinion

[1] Bibl. Theol., p. 268. [2] Ibid., p. 401. [3] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 236.
[4] National Religions, p. 82. [5] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 100.

is given that "it is very improbable that an expression so much in use should have been employed in a double sense; and, as our preceding investigation teaches us, it is absolutely unnecessary to attach any other meaning to it than that of 'a garment worn by the priest upon his shoulders.'" And this is the conclusion of all the pother. An Arabic saying tells of a grammarian who, "after enormous labour, explained that water meant water."

III. In this connection, we must not omit reference to the *Maççebas* or pillars, and the *Asherim*, rendered in E.V. "groves," but probably posts or images of Astarte, which are so often reprobated by prophetical men as adjuncts of the corrupt worship. It has generally been admitted that these were some of the corruptions introduced into the pure national religion; and Vatke,[1] *e.g.*, believed that the reform of Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4, 22) not only swept away the images of Jehovah, but extended also to the Maççebas and the Asheras which existed in his time (Isaiah xvii. 8). In this opinion he was followed by Kuenen[2] and Duhm.[3] Of recent time, however, Stade has taken a step in advance, denying[4] that the reforms of Hezekiah went beyond the destruction of the brazen serpent, and the removal of the images of Jahaveh, which, he concludes from the words of Isaiah, "must have been found in the hands of many private persons." As for the Maççebas and Asheras, which had grown up out of the reverence for external objects, stone-worship and tree-worship—that is to say, were remnants of the old animistic religion—the prophets took no offence at them. In other words, these things were part of the authorised or undisputed religion of Israel. The passage which Vatke

[1] Bibl. Theol., p. 482.
[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 80 ff.
[3] Theol. d. Propheten, p. 195.
[4] Stade's Ztsch. 1883, pp. 9-14.

had relied on for his statement that these things were also removed by Hezekiah, stands, however, in Stade's way. That passage reads (Isa. xvii. 7, 8), "In that day shall a man look unto his Maker, and his eyes shall have respect unto the Holy One of Israel. And he shall not look to the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall he have respect to that which his fingers have made, either the asherim or the sun images." Stade's usual critical instrument—the pruning-knife—comes to his hand; and he declares that the words "altars" and "asherim" and "sun images" are interpolations by a later wordy glossator, and that the verse originally ran—"He shall not look to the work of his hands, neither shall he have respect to that which his fingers have made." It is certainly very remarkable that a mere glossator should have understood altars particularly as the work of a man's hands. The use of that word, instead of some name of a more superstitious object, is pretty good proof that Isaiah himself wrote it; and if he did, the parallelism justifies the other words in the second half of the verse. But there is another passage, in Micah v. 13 f., which also condemns these objects; and as the verses cannot be emended, they are in the block declared to belong to a later period. The verses run: "I will cut off thy graven images, and thy pillars out of the midst of thee; and thou shalt no more worship the work of thine hands. And I will pluck up thine asherim out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy cities." This mode of proceeding is only an example of pushing a foregone conclusion. In a case like the present, where positive statements are not numerous, and where these critics themselves have beforehand with confidence appealed to the prophetical writings as the only reliable authorities, to cut and carve

them, on the *mere grounds* of the hypothesis, is the best refutation of the hypothesis itself.

But there is one passage—and it is the only one—that is adduced by one writer after another to prove that beside the altars of Jahaveh pillars were set up in His honour: "In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar (Maççeba) at the border thereof to Jahaveh" (Isa. xix. 19). Let not the English reader suppose that the "border thereof" is the border of the altar; there is no doubt that it is the border of Egypt. The prophet thus foretells that in the midst of the land of Egypt there shall be an altar to the Lord; and at the border of Egypt there shall be a pillar to the Lord. The conclusion is, that close beside every altar of Jahaveh in Palestine stood also a pillar dedicated to Him; and this is the kind of argument adduced to prove that the setting up of pillars beside Jahaveh's altars was part of the recognised worship. The argument, like many more of its kind, gives proof of great ingenuity, but will hardly commend itself to sober reason as any proof at all. The prophet goes on to say, "It shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt;" and what he seems to mean is, that as the altar shall be for true worship in the heart of Egypt itself, at which the Egyptians "shall worship with sacrifice and oblation, and shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and shall perform it" (v. 21), so the pillar at the border shall be a mark indicating that the whole land is devoted to the Lord. The pillar in itself was no idolatrous object; it was a memorial, or commemorative mark, and as such we frequently read of it in the early history. If superstition turned the simple usage to a wrong purpose; if, especially,

the pillars set up beside Canaanite altars were imitated by the people in their aping of Canaanite idolatries, that does not prove that pillars were part of the original Jahaveh worship, much less that they were in any sense symbols of Jahaveh Himself.

There is still another passage which is relied upon to prove that pillars, ephod, and teraphim were all together parts of the genuine Israelite religion; but if I understand the passage, it proves the very opposite of what it is adduced to support. In Hosea iii. 4 we read: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without ephod or teraphim." The passage is one of threatening, and the inference generally drawn from it is, that as the things mentioned are to be taken from Israel as a punishment, they are to be regarded as things of which they were beforetime lawfully possessed. They were, in a word, to be deprived of both political freedom and religious privileges; and as the former is denoted by king and prince, the latter is summed up in the succeeding expressions, which therefore, at Hosea's time, denoted legitimate elements of their worship. This interpretation, however, though looking plausible enough, does not satisfy the context, and leaves the passage without the point which the prophet gave to it. We have to go back to the beginning of the chapter to see what he is driving at. The prophet is instructed to take back his erring wife, the image of Israel estranged from its God; he buys her from her late paramour, and then comes the passage which explains all: "I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be any man's wife: so will I also be towards thee." This last phrase naturally means,

as it is usually expounded, that the prophet was to keep his wife both secluded from her lovers and separated from himself for many days—*i.e.*, she was brought to his house, but kept in a kind of imprisonment till she should come to a better mind. The point is, that she would neither enjoy the lawful company of her own husband nor the unlawful company of her paramours. Says Robertson Smith:[1] "In v. 3 the sense seems to be that for many days she must sit still, not finding a husband (Jer. iii. 1), —not merely, as A.V., not marrying another, but not enjoying the rights of a lawful wife at all—while at the same time Hosea is 'toward her,' watching over and waiting for her (the phrase is as 2 Kings vi. 11; Jer. xv. 1. Cf. Hos. i. 9)." And then comes the application: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king," &c. They also should endure a time when neither would the favour of God be shown to them, nor the help of false gods avail them. And the enumeration of the things that follow should, on this interpretation, exhibit this double reference. The things are in fact arranged in pairs, and I think light at once falls upon the passage when read in this connection, each pair representing at once the true and the false, the good and the evil, of which they would be deprived—

Neither king	nor prince.
Neither sacrifice	nor pillar.
Neither ephod	nor teraphim.

"Afterwards," says the prophet, "shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king." König's explanation[2] of the passage, which makes the whole list of possessions consist of things

[1] Prophets, p. 410.

[2] Hauptprobleme, p. 69.

irregular (even the monarchy), seems forced in itself, besides failing to present the striking idea of the immediate context. Robertson Smith,[1] who takes sacrifice and maççeba, ephod and teraphim, to have been "recognised as the necessary forms and instruments of the worship of Jehovah," yet in a note makes the double reference: "So Jehovah will deal with Israel when, by destroying the state and the ordinances of worship, He breaks off all intercourse, *not only between Israel and the Baalim, but between Israel and Himself.*" There is no reason to say that the monarchy in itself was distasteful to Hosea, or that sacrifice in itself was condemned by him. But if we take the things in pairs, we get the legitimate monarchy and the bastard lordship, legitimate sacrifices and those with which the idolatrous pillars were associated, the legitimate priestly ephod and the superstitious consulting of teraphim.

[1] O.T. in Jewish Church, Lect. viii. pp. 226, 423.

CHAPTER X.

PRE-PROPHETIC RELIGION CONTINUED: MOLOCH-WORSHIP—HUMAN SACRIFICES—FIRE-WORSHIP.

Statements of Kuenen, Daumer, and Ghillany that Jahaveh was originally a fire or sun god, worshipped with human sacrifices, or identified with Moloch — Semitic mode of naming deities contrasted with Aryan— Arguments for identification drawn from (1) *modes of expression, fire, &c., metaphor;* (2) *Bamoth;* (3) *circumcision and offering of first-born;* (4) *certain records of events*—e.g., *offering of Isaac, Jephthah's daughter, king of Moab;* (5) *declarations of the prophets, Amos* v. 26, *Micah* vi. 7, 8—*"Cumulative" argument from these indications—Warning against proving too much.*

Kuenen, after concluding that the bull was "an indigenous and original symbol of Jahveh," proceeds to say:[1] "Now we know from other sources that this emblem had its place in the worship of the sun. The bull properly symbolises untamed power, especially the violence of the sun, its scorching and consuming heat. Thus Molech is represented with the head of a bull, while horns are the invariable tokens of Astarte. Therefore we certainly do not go too far in inferring from the bull-worship an original relationship between Jahveh and Molech."

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 236.

It may seem to the ordinary reader of the Bible that only by extravagant freaks of criticism can such positions be maintained as the following: "Fire and Moloch worship was the ancestral, legal, and orthodox worship of the nation" of Israel.[1] "Moses never forbade human sacrifices. On the contrary, these constituted a legal and essential part of the state-worship from the earliest times down to the destruction of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah."[2] And it is no doubt the case that the writers from whom we quote went a greater length than more modern critical writers are disposed to do. Kuenen, *e.g.*, in reply to the question whether the Jahaveh of the prophets is a counterpart to Moloch, has no hesitation in returning a negative answer. Still he fearlessly asserts that "the conception of Jahveh originally bordered upon that of Molech, or at least had many points of contact with it;"[3] and that "originally Jahveh was a god of light or of the sun, and the heat of the sun and the consuming fire were considered to proceed from him, and to be ruled by him. In accordance with this, Jahveh was conceived by those who worshipped Him to be a severe being inaccessible to mankind, whom it was necessary to propitiate with sacrifices and offerings, and even with human sacrifices."[4]

In order to the clearer understanding of the bearings of this question, it is proper to remark at the outset that a broad distinction is to be observed between the mode of naming of their gods by most Semitic peoples and that

[1] Title-page of Daumer's Feuer und Molochdienst der alten Hebräer, 1842.

[2] Heading to p. 78 ff. of Ghillany's Die Menschenopfer der alten Hebräer, 1842.

[3] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 241.

[4] Ibid., p. 249.

of Aryan nations. The names given to their gods by the kindred nations in the neighbourhood of Israel had nearly all a similar signification, and were of a more comprehensive import than the usual names of the heathen divinities. We have already seen that Baal, which is the same name as the Babylonian Bel, means lord; so does Adon, which passed into Adonis. El and Elohim had a similar general meaning of power or might, as also Shaddai; and Elyon means Most High. Moloch—or, more correctly, Molech—is closely akin to the word standing for king in Hebrew, and signified ruler (perhaps originally in an abstract sense). In the same way, Chemosh seems to be derived from the idea of subduing or repressing. Such a mode of nomenclature is different from that of the Aryans, who named their deities from single natural phenomena, as fire, light, and so forth; and even although the Semitic deities were associated with natural phenomena of that kind, the names preserved their general significance, and allowed the mind of the worshipper a wider scope. So that the often-repeated dictum, *Nomina numina*, however applicable to Aryan mythology, is not found prevailing among Semitic peoples.[1] It is this peculiar feature of Semitic religion that led M. Renan to his well-known position that these nations had an instinctive leaning to monotheism; for it is plain that when a people calls its god *the ruler*, *the king*, *the most high*, there is not felt the same necessity for gods many, as if every object in nature was the abode or symbol of a special deity. A people keeping to such general designations of the deity, is, if not monotheistic, on the way to monotheism, and in a different position, *e.g.*, from the Assyrian Semites, who multiplied gods with the use

[1] Baudissin, Jahve et Moloch, p. 9.

of every appellative name. The discoveries of Assyriology have shown that a Semitic people could run to the same excess in multiplying deities as Aryan nations; and that even where the name assigned to the deity was of a general kind, he might be associated with fire, light, or heaven, as in heathen mythology. M. Renan has, therefore, now so far modified his position as to claim a monotheistic instinct for only the nomad Semitic peoples. At the same time, the feature of the nomenclature just described has to be kept in view, for it furnishes some explanation of the possibility some have found of identifying the God of the Hebrews with the gods of the surrounding nations.

The precise question for us, now, is not what might have been done, but what was actually done in times of which we have historical knowledge. We have some information as to the character ascribed to Moloch by his worshippers, and the manner in which he was worshipped. What we have to inquire is, whether the same or similar qualities were ascribed by the Israelites to their national God, and whether they paid Him similar honours, whether even the two deities were so far identified in conception as that when a Hebrew said, Our God is *Melech,* he meant to imply that Jahaveh was the same as the deity whom the heathen worshipped as Molech. The identification or close assimilation of the two deities is supposed to be made out by a consideration of certain modes of speech, as well as of certain ceremonies or practices testified to in the Hebrew writings; by the record of certain events, obscured no doubt by popular tradition or prophetic teaching, but still intelligible; and even by unequivocal statements of the prophets themselves. We have therefore to consider the various proofs, and see whether they

are substantiated by a sober exegesis of the passages which are appealed to.

(1.) To begin with certain expressions or modes of speaking of God. It is maintained that the constant application to Jahaveh of language denoting fire and light is a proof that the popular conception made Him a sun or fire God, so that He was not distinguishable from Moloch. The passages in which this mode of speech is employed are too numerous to be quoted.[1] Kuenen adds, "They are too numerous to be looked upon as accidental, or as the result of arbitrary choice; and this is the less possible that the comparison also recurs continually beyond the prophetic literature in its narrower sense."[2] He then refers to the glory of the Lord being said to be like devouring fire on Sinai (Exod. xxiv. 17), to the angel appearing in a flame of fire in the bush (Exod. iii. 2), to the expressions "a consuming fire, a jealous God" (Deut. iv. 24; cf. ix. 3), and the description in the 18th Psalm of smoke going up out of His nostrils, fire out of His mouth devouring (Psalm xviii. 8), &c. He is careful to guard himself by saying[3] that of course the pious among the Israelites, in using these expressions, were aware that they spoke in metaphor, but still it is on consideration of such passages that he makes the assertion we have already quoted, "that the conception of Jahaveh originally bordered upon that of Moloch, or at least had many points of contact with it." This conclusion, however, is warrantable only if these metaphorical expressions, when originally used, were not regarded as metaphors at all, but

[1] A few of the more striking may be noted: Amos i. 4, 7, 10, 12, 14, ii. 2, 5, vii. 4; Hos. viii. 14; Isa. x. 17, xxix. 6, xxx. 27, xxxiii. 14,—all from *prophetic* Scriptures.

[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 240.

[3] Ibid., p. 241.

plain statements of fact. For I do not think Kuenen means to imply that the original conception of Moloch by his worshippers was that of a spiritual being to whom they applied these expressions in a metaphorical sense. If, however, Kuenen and his school will insist upon it that metaphorical language must originally have been used as plain statement of fact, then the essential point in dispute is assumed, for we must necessarily admit that, on this concession, all religious thought at first expresses itself in language borrowed from material things; and therefore without more ado we may say that all religion begins with the worship of material things or with purely materialistic conceptions. Stade, in speaking of fetishism, says bluntly,[1] "Nothing on earth begins as a symbol, but is taken as a reality." I should think that the very first attempts at language are symbols, and consciously regarded as such Language is the effort of intelligence to express itself; but if a savage makes a gesture or utters a cry, he knows quite well that that is a sign and symbol, and that it is taken by his fellow-savage as a symbol of something to be conveyed from mind to mind. It is simply impossible for man to use language in regard to religious feelings and ideas without falling into metaphor; even the current phraseology of Christianity is highly metaphorical. Will Kuenen or any of his school tell us what expressions in any language were available, when consciousness first sought to express itself on these subjects, that would not be liable to similar misapprehension? Holiness, purity, and such other expressions, in the most elevated diction that we possess, come back to be properties of matter. As regards the manifestations of Deity with the accompaniments of

[1] Gesch., vol. i. p. 405, footnote 3.

thunder, lightning, or fire, it is evident that if such theophanies are conceivable at all, they could have no more striking accompaniments. And as to the use of language denoting light, it need only be remarked that as the sun is the most striking object in the firmament, the one source, as it seems to the simple primitive mind, of light and warmth, pure, exalted, potent, we need not wonder that not only Moloch-worshippers, but seekers after God in all lands and in all states of education, have taken it as the image of the great and holy Being after whom they seek, and developed their religious vocabulary by ringing the changes on the phrases that denote its unique qualities. No doubt many tribes using this mode of speech have paid reverence to the sun itself; but it requires to be proved whether this is the "original" view or an aberration; and at all events, to grant that Israel did the same, because they used the same mode of speech, would be, as has been just said, to concede the very point in dispute. The question is, To what precise time does Kuenen refer when he says that the conception of Jahaveh *originally* bordered upon that of Moloch? If it was the time when this mode of speaking of God first came into use, then we may be driven back to a primitive period when the earliest of the Semitic peoples were seeking to give expression to religious instincts; and the phraseology, so obvious in its first use, and so expressive, may have maintained itself, as it has done to our own time, without leading to misunderstanding. There is a transparent fallacy underlying all this kind of reasoning, that, if a *primary* meaning can be fixed to a term, that meaning may be held to adhere to the term at whatever time it is employed. In this way "original" meanings are attached to expressions down to the period immediately

preceding the writing prophets, or even later. This school of thinkers must either tell us what kind of language *could* have been employed by a people with any spiritual perceptions at all; or they must simply declare that no people could at the outset entertain any conception of a spiritual kind, which is to beg the whole question.

(2.) An argument for the identity of Jahaveh and Moloch has been drawn from the practice of the worship of both on high places or *bamoth;* but Kuenen[1] sees the weakness of the argument, and lays little stress upon it. For the practice is so common and obvious in all religions that it can prove nothing. In my opinion, far too much has been made of the practice in Israel, as if in itself it was more sinful to worship on hills than on plains, and as if the prophets found fault with it for the mere situation. It was the associations of the worship with heathen rites and superstitious beliefs that made it obnoxious, just as it was not sacrifice in itself but unmeaning or idolatrous sacrifice which the prophets condemned. The quiet of the mountain, its remoteness from the busy world, and its nearness to heaven, would, in any country and in any age, suggest hallowed thoughts (we cannot forget the custom of Him who went up into a mountain to pray, and spent all the night in prayer); and, given a place made sacred by religious sentiment, the aberrations of superstition are liable to follow. So the shady tree and the cool sparkling spring, in a country where shadow and refreshing water are the greatest comforts, would irresistibly make them the scene of quiet reflection, then of devotion, and then of superstition. People in our colder climates are apt to forget or ignore such things; but I believe the prophet, who reproved the worship under green trees, came

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 241.

nearer to a true explanation of the origin of the worship in the hint, "because the shadow thereof is good" (Hos. iv. 13), than modern critics, with their learned disquisitions as to the tree suggesting life and being the abode of a spirit or a divinity.

(3.) We come now to consider an argument for the identity of Moloch and Jahaveh drawn from the observances of circumcision and the dedication of the first-born. These practices, though toned down and softened into harmless religious ceremonies, are held to be proofs that Jahaveh was originally regarded as a bloodthirsty being, not the preserver of life but its destroyer, identical with Moloch. Kuenen[1] admits that he has here very little positive proof to rely upon, and even indicates certain considerations that might be construed into arguments against his own position. For instance, the account of the institution of circumcision (in Gen. xvii.) might be taken to prove that the rite was "an arbitrary symbol of dedication to Jahveh"; but this account, he says, is "late," and "we do not at all see why this particular ceremony is to serve as a token of the covenant between El-Shaddai and Abraham, together with his descendants." He also concedes that "perhaps its meaning was afterwards somewhat modified, and it was looked upon as a purification by which the Israelite was rendered fit to draw near to Jahveh. At all events, it is remarkable that in other nations of antiquity it was only performed upon the priests." The only passage, in fact, that Kuenen relies upon, is the brief passage, Exod. iv. 24-26, "When Jahveh assails Moses and seeks to kill him, his wife Zipporah circumcises her son and throws the foreskin to Jahveh, whereupon the latter lets Moses go." The passage is very

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 238 f.

obscure, the text itself being uncertain;[1] but whatever it may mean, it cannot be taken as a proof that circumcision represents an old custom of human sacrifice. It *may* mean that an uncircumcised Hebrew was liable to death, but that is quite another thing; and it can be quite naturally construed to mean that circumcision was in its first conception—as Kuenen admits it became at a later date—a symbol of purification and dedication to Jahaveh. His admission that among other nations of antiquity it was only performed upon the priests, might have convinced him that some such idea was fundamental. Daumer as usual goes further, and maintains[2] that circumcision was only a milder substitution of castration, and refers to such a custom among the Hottentots. He does not, however, attempt to prove that Moloch-worshippers practised this in honour of their god; nor has any one shown that Moloch-worshippers practised even circumcision. Instead of reasoning from a single doubtful passage and general considerations, this class of writers should tell us when this precise rite took the place of human sacrifice, and why this precise rite, so unlike human sacrifice, should have been substituted—a rite which can be so obviously explained on the principle that the deity claimed the *sanctification* of life, not its destruction.

By precisely the same kind of reasoning it is sought to be made out that the dedication of the first-born to Jahaveh is a remnant of an older custom of sacrificing the first-born. Kuenen admits here again that, taken alone, the custom may be classed with the presentation of the first-fruits of the earth, as an act of acknowledgment to the bountiful

[1] For various explanations, see the Queen's Printer's Bible on the passage.

[2] Feuer und Molochdienst, p. 22.

Giver of all that is good, the source of all fruitfulness. But he maintains that the *historical* explanation which the Biblical writers give of the origin of the custom (though in his view it is *not* historical) is in favour of his position. At the exodus from Egypt Jahaveh slew the first-born of the Egyptians, but spared those of the Israelites, and from that period the first-born in Israel belong to Him, and are either sacrificed in His honour or ransomed from Him. This account being late, we can only conclude from it that at a later period the dedication of the first-born was brought into connection with the deliverance from the Egyptian bondage. "Yet it is probable that while this was done, the original meaning of this custom was yet adhered to as closely as possible. But in that case Jahveh appears here again as a severe being, who must be propitiated by sacrifices, and induced to waive his right to the lives of men and beasts. In other words, we have the same idea of the character of the Deity which lies at the root of the dedication of the first-born and of human sacrifice."[1] Now it must seem very strange that at a *late* time, when, according to Kuenen's view, prophetic influence would be strongly felt, an attempt should be made by bringing this custom into connection with the deliverance from Egypt, to adhere to the original meaning of the custom, and under the guise of an unhistorical story as to the slaughter of Egypt's first-born to explain how a rite of long standing in Israel was originally a custom of sacrificing their first-born. Here again it would be more to the point to tell us when the substitution of the milder for the more cruel rite took place, and why, the milder rite having established itself (presumably as a better), the effort should have been made to keep alive

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 239 f.

the remembrance of one that was cruel and long obsolete. Kuenen says truly, that in regard to both this custom and that of circumcision we should look for a reference to the nature of the deity to whom they were rendered as religious acts. Now, in both cases the ceremonies are quite as reconcilable with the nature of a deity who was the giver and defender of life, as with that of one who was its destroyer, and in this connection the parallel custom of offering the first-fruits of the earth should not be overlooked. Moreover, there is not only the nature of the deity to be considered, but the effect upon the mind of the worshipper. And both rites, if taken as symbolical of the consecration to God of the first and best that man has, are not only quite in keeping with all the Scriptural indications which we possess, and consistent with those obscure references on which Kuenen proceeds, but even very significant as religious acts and means of religious education. The thing we want to prove is the nature of the deity reverenced in these services. The services in themselves do not suggest a deity of a repulsive character, who is the enemy of life, but are thoroughly in keeping with the character of a deity such as the Hebrew prophets represented their national God to be. The rites themselves, confessedly at the time of which we have historical knowledge, had the more beneficent associations.

(4.) We next come to consider the argument drawn from certain records of alleged events, which, though obscured or misinterpreted by the narrators, give evidence, it is said, that human sacrifice to Jahaveh was an original custom in Israel, and that therefore the God of Israel was no other than Moloch, or at all events a deity of similar character.

We begin with the account given in Gen. xxii. of

Abraham's offering of his son Isaac, which is much relied upon in this connection.[1] And, not to take an extreme representation of the view, let us hear the rather moderate statement of the argument by Kuenen:[2] "The well-known narrative of Abraham's offering . . . does not by any means recommend human sacrifice, but the disposition evinced in the sacrifice of a child, the readiness to give up even the most precious object to Jahveh, is highly extolled by the author (vers. 16-18); if Jahveh does not wish that disposition to be confirmed by the deed itself, still by his unqualified praise he makes known that it is no more than just and appropriate, and that what he does not desire he *could* demand from his servant." Now it seems to me that though we admit all that Kuenen here says, we are as far as ever from establishing the existence of the custom of human sacrifice; and when he proceeds, "we are not surprised, therefore, that human sacrifice appears as an element of the bull-worship in the kingdom of the ten tribes," there is no connection between his premises and his conclusion. We are, to be sure, warranted in concluding from the narrative, that the narrator knew what was meant by the offering of human sacrifice, and that he means to convey to us that Abraham understood by it the offering of the very dearest possession to Jahaveh. But we ask, if such offerings were the custom in the writer's day, as Daumer would assert, or if it was the common practice in the Abrahamic stage of worship, why does the writer make so much of the one instance of it, and record it as a singular triumph of devotion? If we may be allowed for a moment to suppose that there is historical truth in the narrative (in other words, to put ourselves in the position

[1] Daumer, p. 34 ff. [2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 237.

of the narrator), we should say that the whole story exhibits not only the faith of the patriarch, but part of his education in the spiritual character of his God. Education by contrast is one of the most effective kind, and the Biblical writers make us familiar with it by their various references to the religious beliefs and practices of the peoples around Israel, and in such injunctions as, "So shall ye not do to Jahaveh your God." To Abraham, not unfamiliar with various ways in which among his heathen ancestors the deity was propitiated, the testing question comes, "Art thou prepared to obey thy God as fully as the people about thee obey their gods?" and in the putting forth of his faith in the act of obedience, he learns that the nature of his God is different.[1] Instead, therefore, of saying that the narrative gives proof of the existence of human sacrifice as an early custom in Israel, it is more reasonable to regard it as giving an explanation why it was that, from early time, this had been a prime distinction of Israel that human sacrifice *was not practised* as among the heathen. The fundamental idea of the heathen rite was the same as that which lay at the foundation of Hebrew ordinance, *the best to God;* but by presenting to us this story of the offering of Isaac, and by presenting it in this precise form, the writer simply teaches the same truth taught by all the prophets, that to obey is better than sacrifice—in other words, that the God worshipped in Israel from Abraham's time was a

[1] In a similar manner, in the story of Abraham's intercession for the cities of the plain, he is taught the merciful character of the God to whom he prays. It is a shallow view of this narrative to represent it as a huckstering proceeding, in which the suppliant beats down the deity to the lowest point. The story illustrates the Christian truth, "According to your faith it shall be done to you," for as long as Abraham has faith to pray he is answered.

God who did not delight in destroying life, but in saving and sanctifying it.

Just as little, I think, does the story of Jephthah (Judges xi.) and his daughter prove that human sacrifice was the custom in Israel at the time of the Judges[1] or at any time. Even if we admit that Jephthah contemplated the possibility or probability of a member of his household being the first to come out to meet him—even if we admit that when he "did with her according to his vow which he had vowed" (v. 39), he actually offered her as a sacrifice,—I maintain that by any sober criticism of the passage, nothing is proved beyond the solitary act. No doubt we must admit that Jephthah may have been acquainted with human sacrifice as practised by the nations about him. The writer of the narrative, if we place him in the early "literary age" of Israel, could not but have known of it. But all the details of the narrative, all the circumstances associated with the event—the sadness and grief of the father, the pause before the execution of the vow, the annual ceremony of a four days' lament for Jephthah's daughter—show that the thing was regarded as quite unusual, and had stamped itself in the national mind as an occurrence rare in history. Possibly, nay probably, a certain glory encircled the name of Jephthah's daughter for her extraordinary devotion, but this was just because the devotion *was* extraordinary, not because it was an instance of a common usage. It is idle in such a connection to talk of this as a proof that the Mosaic law forbidding human sacrifice was not known to Jephthah. Such a law, or a hundred similar, may have existed and not been known to this Gileadite chieftain; but even if the law was

[1] Daumer, p. 40 ff.

known, he was not in a mood to regulate his actions by such considerations. The man was burning with passion for revenge, and to nerve himself to his utmost effort, he bound himself by the most solemn vow he could think of. Thenceforth, when the victory was secured, there was no question, to a superstitious man, of Mosaic laws—nay, he repressed his strongest human instincts; but the act was not, as our critics would make us believe, the performance of an ordinary rite to a bloodthirsty God. Jephthah's god for the time was his own feeling of revenge and injured pride, and his law was the *honour* and sacredness of the vow.

We have still to refer to another passage. It is related[1] that the King of Moab, sore pressed by the allied armies of Israel and Judah and Edom, and having failed in an attempt "to break through unto the King of Edom," "took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall. And there was great indignation against Israel, and they departed from him and returned to their own land." The passage has been variously explained, and in different ways an argument has been drawn from it to prove that Moloch and Jehovah were identical, or that the tone of Israel's belief in their God was as low as that of the Moabites. Daumer, *e.g.*, who takes the lowest possible view, says, "This offering, according to the Biblical representation of it, worked so effectually that the besiegers had to withdraw." And as the word translated "indignation" is the word used of the divine wrath, he goes on to

[1] 2 Kings iii. 26, 27. This passage is also referred to in another connection as a proof that the power of Jahaveh was confined to his own land, and that beyond its boundaries the gods of the respective nations were more powerful.—Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 430.

say, "There came a great wrath of Jehovah upon Israel and drove them away, so that the God to whom the Moabite prince presented this horrible offering, evidently coincides with the Biblical Jehovah, and the power and effectiveness which such sacrifices had with Jehovah lie before our eyes as recognised by the Bible itself."[1] Others explain the passage to mean that the wrath of the Moabite god, called forth by this costly appeal to him, was aroused, and proved so effective that Israel had the worst of the battle; and that under the obscure phraseology the Hebrew writer indicated, what he would not say outright, that Jahaveh was not a match, on this occasion, for the Moabite god on Moabite territory. I confess I do not know what precisely the passage means;[2] the multiplicity of interpretations given of it is a proof how obscure it is. But to attempt to explain it with this perpetual insinuation that the Biblical writers have something to conceal, is to come to it with a prepossession, and seems to me to be fatal to any satisfactory exegesis. The writer, if he was so afraid of compromising the dignity of the national god, could have omitted the reference altogether, or safeguarded the national faith in a less ambiguous manner. This is not an instance of a writer finding a very ancient document, and having to gloss it over to conceal its original meaning. The time referred to is in the historical period; and the writer was under the influence of prophetic ideas, and was not likely to express, in this hesitating and doubtful way, the convictions of his time as to the relative power of Jahaveh and heathen gods.

(5.) As little convincing is the argument drawn from

[1] Feuer und Molochdienst, p. 46.

[2] It is supposed by many that there may be an obscure reference to this occurrence, whatever it was, in Amos ii. 1.

statements of the prophets. One passage, indeed, is so convincing to Daumer,[1] that he says it "shatters all our traditional theology with one blow." It is the passage in Amos (v. 25 f.) which Daumer interprets to mean that "Israel, during all the forty years long in the wilderness, did not serve Jehovah, but Saturn-Kijjun, as their king (Melech, Molech, Moloch)." Such a distinct declaration, he says,[2] should be seriously faced, and he complains that only in his own time (1842) had writers begun to give their due weight to such prophetic utterances, and in this way to lay the foundations of an entirely new history of the Old Testament. In point of fact, from Vatke[3] onwards, critical scholars have relied very strongly on this passage in support of their views. Kuenen may be taken as a moderate exponent of the argument. He says,[4] "The prophet Amos states that the Israelites carried about in the desert 'the tabernacle [or some other object: the reading is uncertain] of their king,' or 'Melech,' and other idolatrous apparatus besides. This statement may be regarded as historical. At their entrance into Canaan the Israelites found there the worship of a deity to whom children were sacrificed (Deut. xii. 30, 31; 2 Kings xvi. 3. Comp. Levit. xviii. 21; xx. 2-5), probably likewise called Melech. It may be assumed that the Israelitish Melech-worship became fused with the Canaanitish, and that thus from the time of their entrance into Canaan this worship existed, and the sacrifice of children to Melech occurred sporadically. The worship of Melech, however, was of no great importance." With this last statement Daumer would not agree; but, letting that pass, it is worth while drawing attention to the readiness with

[1] Feuer und Molochdienst, p. 47 ff.
[2] Ibid., p. 49.
[3] Bibl. Theol., p. 191.
[4] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 250.

which all this school accepts as "historical" a statement of the prophet Amos in regard to a time of which, in other connections, they are fond of telling us, he could have had no knowledge whatever; and it is somewhat peculiar to find writers who tell us that there was no forty years' wandering in the desert at all, accepting the testimony of Amos in regard to the religious practices of a time which he so precisely defines. Again, a favourite proceeding with the modern school, when a passage is inconvenient for their theory, is to say that it has been touched by later hands, or that it disturbs the connection, and therefore is to be rejected as an interpolation. The English reader may look at the passage before us in its connection and see whether it is not particularly one of that description. Yet we never hear from the critics a word against its genuineness. I do not mean to cast suspicion on it on that account, or to dispute Kuenen's assertion that the statement of the prophet "may be regarded as historical." My difficulty is that, as the various interpretations of the passage will show, one can scarcely make out what the statement precisely is.[1] And whatever it may be, the question arises, If this Moloch-worship was the recognised national worship of Israel in the desert, why should Amos make that a matter of reproach, as he seems to do? To which the only reply can be the usual one. The prophet, from his prophetical standpoint, projected his own ideas into the past, and gives us an unhistorical view of the religion,—the same prophet who in the same breath is taken as a proof of a historical statement to the very opposite effect. I do not suppose modern criticism can go much further. If it be urged that Amos merely states that this Moloch-worship was practised in the desert, then

[1] See Note XIX.

who is to deny that? The Biblical historians represent the religious life of Israel at that time as far from correct; and it is they who tell us plainly of the practice of Moloch-worship in the time of the Kings. But it is a fiction of modern writers that this worship was ever regarded by prophetic men, or by the best of the nation, as the national worship of Israel.

There is still the famous passage in Micah vi. 6, 7: "Wherewithal shall I come before Jahaveh? . . . Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" in which, says Kuenen, "it is undoubtedly implied that in his days such a sacrifice was not looked upon as at all unreasonable; . . . if human sacrifice had been foreign to the service of Israel's God, he could not have mentioned it in this manner."[1] Daumer goes further: "In these words is expressed without doubt the prevailing belief to be that Jehovah has pleasure not only in animal sacrifices but also in human offerings, and that in the offering of a first-born son there was the efficacy of wiping out sin. . . . Israel worships its Jehovah with burnt-offerings, calves of a year old, rams, oil, and the offering of first-born sons, and believes that this is necessary for salvation and in accordance with Jehovah's will and law;"[2] and in a footnote he blames Gramberg for still adhering to the old belief that the custom of offering children had passed over from the Moloch-worship to that of Jehovah. It is difficult to place one's self in the mental attitude of one who can reason in this way, or to understand how to such a one the rhetoric of a Hebrew writer can have any force. The prophet propounds a most solemn question—How is man

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 237.
[2] Feuer und Molochdienst, p. 52.

to find acceptance with God?—and his answer[1] takes the form of a climax in which he rises from the idea of a costly to that of a still costlier offering, and, as Kuenen rightly observes, he knows that there is a better way than by any such sacrifice. To Daumer it may be replied, if the offering of children was as common as the offering of rams and oil, why does the prophet make all this ado about it? The prophet has no idea of *ordinary* offerings in his mind. Does Daumer mean to tell us that it was the common thing for an individual offerer, in order to atone for sin, to offer *thousands* of rams, and *ten thousand rivers* of oil? It is on these points that the emphasis lies; and it is these that give force to the grand climax, shall I give my *first-born* for my transgression? The prophet supposes the very highest form conceivable of sacrifice, and declares that it is all in vain. And the proper conclusion to be drawn from his word is, that no sacrifice in itself is pleasing to Jahaveh, not even the most costly that could be conceived. But it is asked, Why does he instance this kind of offering if he did not know of it? The answer is, He did know of it, but he did not know of it as a thing done to Jahaveh, any more than he knew of ten thousands of rivers of oil being offered. Is there no such thing as rhetoric for our critics? When St Paul, in one of his most eloquent flights, says, "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, I am nothing," are we to conclude that the early Christians of his day, having as at Pentecost given all their goods to a common fund, were also in the habit of worshipping

[1] It may be pointed out that the passage, standing in connection with v. 5, may be taken as expressing, dramatically, a question put by Balak (vv. 6, 7), with Balaam's answer (v. 8).

this same fiery Moloch? One would say there was less reason for St Paul making such a rhetorical supposition of self-immolation in his day than for Micah, with Moloch-worshippers around him, making it in his. But in neither case is the custom proved, and there is absolutely nothing more in the critical argument from the words of Micah than an aggravating attempt to spoil one of the finest passages of sacred oratory.

It is unnecessary to enter into lengthened examination of other passages relied upon in this connection, such as David's slaughter of Saul's descendants to appease the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1-14), and Samuel's hewing Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal (1 Sam. xv. 33). The general remark may be made, that by themselves they are not even so plausible as the cases already stated, and like these do not really touch the point in dispute.[1] Kuenen, feeling that such passages as have been considered do not yield a decisive result for his view, makes the remark:[2] "A solitary instance of this nature would perhaps be susceptible of another interpretation; in their interdependence these various facts undoubtedly bear witness to the accuracy of the conclusion advanced above;" and it is a favourite method with writers of his school to speak of the argument as cumulative. It is a very specious plea, and I believe more are led by it to give their adherence to the modern theory than by any one positive and conclusive proof. Seeing that so many passages and references can be made to lend countenance to the theory, they come to the conclusion that "there must be something in it," and are vaguely convinced or half persuaded. Yet we are familiar with the similar marshalling of evidence in favour of all kinds of extravagant theories. The in-

[1] See Note XX.

[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 237.

dividual proofs have no force till the theory to be proved is thrown into the balance, although an opposing theory would equally well act as counterpoise, or even suit better. Before there can be cumulative evidence, there must rest in each individual case a presumption, and two cases must not *mutually* supplement one another, else it is a cumulus of unsupported suspicions. We know how in social life the iteration of a calumny is supported by innumerable little incidents, not one of which in itself has any positive value, but all, strung together on the string of whispered slander, suffice by their cumulative evidence to ruin a character. It is necessary to protest against such a mode of reasoning, because it is apt to sap the very foundations of exegesis on which alone any positive result must rest. When Daumer, for example, in his effort to establish his thesis, draws proofs from the practices of nations at the most remote distances from one another, and in the most diverse stages of culture, and forces the most natural usages of language into evidences for his view, one is led to despair of the possibility of getting any reliable conclusion at all from the Biblical writings. For him it is sufficient that there is a river in Macedon and a river in Monmouth, and that there is salmon in both. But his mode of procedure brings Biblical exegesis into contempt; and it is a pity that more modern writers have not been warned by his example not to enter upon a line of reasoning which manifestly ends in absurdity. Surely in the examination of a problem so very delicate and so very vital, it is becoming to proceed with the utmost caution. If a passage called as evidence is seen to have no direct force, when calmly interpreted in the light of the context, the witness should simply be made to stand down, and not be

again appealed to. It should not be beneath the dignity of a critic to say frankly that a passage, whether from the condition of the text or from our ignorance of its reference, is neutral or unintelligible, so that attention may be concentrated on less ambiguous proofs.

After all their bold pretensions, therefore, to prove that the pre-prophetic religion of Israel was of the low character affirmed of it, the critics, it seems to me, succeed in proving very little. They have done valuable service in drawing attention to popular conceptions or misconceptions; and had their labours been confined to this as a contribution to our knowledge of the working of the religious instinct at all times, they would have been excellent. This indiscriminate mixing up of early and late, however, which is seen in the reasoning from metaphorical language and so-called mythological expressions, defeats the very end of the argument, which is to show development. And there is ever the objection to the whole argument, that it assumes a tone of prevailing thought on religious matters at the very time of the first writing prophets, which is inconsistent with the tone in which these men write, and directly in the teeth of the declarations which they make on the whole subject.

Finally, however, the modern historians should beware of attempting to prove too much in this direction; for the more the pre-prophetic religion is depreciated, the more difficult it will be to account for its sudden rise to the level in which we find it in the earliest writing prophets. There is not only the task of accounting for the continuance of Israel as a separate people, with distinctive beliefs and practices, during the long period that this low stage lasted, but there is the greater difficulty of showing how, from the low level which is assumed, it was possible for

the religion by ordinary development to rise to the ethic monotheism in which it so soon appears. Granted even that the case for the modern theory has been so far made out, what was there at all in the religion of Jahaveh to make it a distinctive religion of Israel, and to give to that people the only bond that could unite them to one another, and mark them off from their neighbours? Or if that is not enough, what was there to enable them to rise, as they did rise, from this low level to the height of the so-called ethic monotheism? And how was it that, with the first appearance of written prophecy, we find the teaching of a much purer faith, appealing also to a hoary antiquity for its sanction?

We must therefore now inquire particularly what was this Jahaveh religion, and how its subsistence for so long and its rise to its purest form are accounted for.

CHAPTER XI.

THE JAHAVEH RELIGION.

The Jahaveh religion characteristic of Israel—The points to be examined in this chapter: I. Its origin; II. Its specific initial significance—I. Origin sought for in (1) *Indo-Germanic;* (2) *Assyro-Babylonian;* (3) *Egyptian;* (4) *Kenite; and* (5) *Canaanite language or religion—Conclusion that it is distinctively Israelite—II. Significance—Etymological considerations—Critical derivation, "thunderer"—Biblical derivation—Historical considerations in its favour—Importance of determining the initial signification of the name—If it is of Israelite origin, and introduced under definite historical circumstances, it must have a specific signification—The other explanation is open to the following objections:* (1) *There is no evidence that Jahaveh was a tribal God;* (2) *No reason is given for the substitution of the name Jahaveh for El;* (3) *Stade's proofs are a confusion of early and late, and give no intelligible account of the initial significance of the pre-prophetic conception of Jahaveh—Conclusion that higher qualities were there from the first.*

The thing that distinguished Israel in early times from the surrounding nations, and in later times, was their contribution to the religious good of the world, was the possession of the Jahaveh religion. Even if we admit that, as is maintained, Jahaveh was only to them what the gods of the nations around them were to their worshippers, they had this, at least, as a distinctive mark; and it was from it as a germ that the purer religion of the prophets was

developed. Even if, in pre-prophetic times, the national religion was of a low type, at the bottom of it lay the belief that Jahaveh was Israel's God; nay, even if they thought it no sin to employ the names of heathen deities in forming proper names and so forth, they were all the time professors of the Jahaveh religion, and the most that can be said is, that they bestowed on Jahaveh Himself those names that other nations applied to their gods. I have advanced considerations to show that the positions referred to as to the low character of the pre-prophetic religion are not by any means established. But I insist upon this point now, that even if they were established, the great problem has still to be solved. Two points, mentioned in a former chapter,[1] still remain to be demonstrated: (1) We must be shown the origin of the Jahaveh religion, and it must be seen to have such distinctive marks as will make it characteristic of Israel, and bind them together at the most critical period of their history; and then (2) the process of development must be pointed out by which, in well-marked historical stadia, it rose to the religion which is described as ethic monotheism. Briefly put, we must have an explanation of the Jahaveh religion at both extremities of its development, at its start and at its final development; and it is incumbent on those who refuse to take the Biblical account of the matter to present us with another that will stand the test of historical criticism. They must show us (*a*) the source of the Jahaveh religion; (*b*) its specific initial significance; and (*c*) its historical development from the lower to the higher stage. A consideration of the first two of these three points will be the subject of this chapter.

I. In regard to the origin of the Jahaveh religion, as in

[1] Chapter vi. p. 166.

regard to other distinctive features of the history, investigations have been pursued in various directions with the view of discovering, if possible, some point of contact with and dependence upon other nations with which Israel was brought into connection; and different investigators have thought that they have discovered either the actual name Jahaveh, or the idea which it expresses, in the languages and religious conceptions of different peoples. Inquiries of this kind are perfectly legitimate, and often lead to most instructive results. The issue of them, however, must be carefully noted. When, for example, Wellhausen says that Nabiism passed over from the Phœnicians to Israel at a certain time, that is not a final explanation of Israelite prophetism. Even if the fact were as he asserts —and it depends very much on his assertion—there still remains to be explained how the "passing over" took place at such a time, and the more difficult fact that it passed over into so different a phenomenon; and for both these circumstances we have to fall back upon some predisposing cause, and some inherent capability in Israel. Similarly, should it be proved that the name Jahaveh, or the idea denoted by the name, is found among some other people, we are no nearer the solution of the problem. First of all, we are driven a step farther back in our search for its origin, and have to explain whence that other people got it; and secondly, we have to account for Israel's adopting it; and lastly, we have to explain why it became, in their hands, quite a new thing.

The investigations that have been made in the directions indicated are interesting and exhaustive. The name, or the idea which it expresses, has been in turn sought for in (1) Indo-Germanic; (2) in Assyro-Babylonian; (3) Egyptian; (4) Kenite; and (5) Canaanite lan-

guage or religion. We must briefly consider the arguments advanced for these various views.

(1.) An Indo-Germanic source of the name has been sought by some scholars. Thus Von Bohlen,[1] referring to the varying forms, Jave, Jaho, and Jao (Ἰαώ), under which the name appears in writings of the Jews, Samaritans, and Christian fathers, says that "in this shape it is clearly connected with the names of the Deity in many other languages"—Greek, Latin, and Sanscrit—and that the original form would have been Jah. This opinion has been pronounced by J. G. Müller[2] as "not lightly to be set aside." The idea is that the Indo-Germanic root *div* = shine, which lies at the basis of Jovis or Diovis, is to be recognised as also underlying the Hebrew tetragrammaton, which originally may have sounded Javo, Jevo, Jove, or Jeva. But the connection of the Indo-Germanic root with the Hebrew vocable cannot be made out so easily as is thus done. And there are two special difficulties in the way of such a theory,—(*a*) that if Jahaveh is originally an Indo-Germanic word corresponding to a root *div*, which is widely diffused in these languages, it does not appear to have passed over in this sense into the Semitic languages generally, but only to have been appropriated for a special name by a small and comparatively insignificant branch of them; and (*b*) more particularly, there is already in the Hebrew language, not to speak of other branches of Semitic, a common root, *hawa*, from which the name can be derived by an exact analogy with other proper names, like Isaac, Jacob, and so forth.

[1] Introduction to the Book of Genesis, Heywood's Translation (1855), vol. i. p. 151 f. Compare Vatke, Bibl. Theol., p. 672.

[2] Die Semiten in ihrem Verhältniss zu Chamiten u. Japhethiten (1872), p. 163 f.

Hitzig[1] sought in another way to derive the name, or rather the idea, from an Aryan source. The Armenian name of God is Astuads (Astovads) — *i.e.*, *astvat*, "the becoming one"; and Hitzig supposed that Moses — to whom he ascribes the introduction of Jahaveh as a divine name—reflecting on the truth and depth of the thought contained in this designation of the Deity, adopted it in a translated form as the name of the God whose religion he taught. What gives a colour of support to this explanation is, that some of the earliest traditions of the Hebrews seem to come from or to be connected with Armenia and the north-east generally.[2] There remains the difficulty, however, of explaining how Moses, in the land of Egypt, should have had a knowledge of the Armenian language, and should have turned to that quarter for an idea to denote his God. If there is any truth in the theory at all, it would rather lead to a pre-Mosaic origin of the idea. And if the early Armenians expressed the idea they attached to God by a word denoting Being or Becoming, it is possible to conceive that the family of Abraham, travelling from Babylon by that way, may have reached the same notion; and that thus the *idea*, kept as a primitive tradition down to the time of Moses, found expression in the tetragrammaton which was its translation.

(2.) Turning now to another quarter, Friedrich Delitzsch[3] has lately maintained that the name Jehovah is of Assyro-

[1] Bibl. Theol. d. Alten Test., p. 37 f.

[2] Dillmann, in a paper, "Ueber die Herkunft der urgeschichtlichen Sagen der Hebräer" (Sitzungsberichte der Akad. d. Wissenschaften zu Berlin, 27 April 1882), contends that many of these traditions not only have their counterparts in Babylonian beliefs, but are the common property of other Eastern peoples.

[3] Wo lag das Paradies? (1881), p. 158 ff.

Babylonian origin. The divine name Jau, he says, the Hebrews had in common with at least the Philistines, and probably with the Canaanites generally; and it was in fact to distinguish their own God from the Jau of the other peoples that the name was modified to the Hebrew form, in the sense of the "becoming one." But, he proceeds, this Canaanite name Jah (like most other Canaanite divine names) has its root in the Babylonian pantheon, answering to Ja-u (corresponding to Ilu), the supreme God of the oldest Babylonian system. The name, however, is the creation of the non-Semitic people of Babylon, though it came to the Canaanites through the Semitic Babylonians. The original Accadian form of the name was *i*, which the Semitic Babylonians transformed into Jau, in which form it reached the Canaanites; so that, instead of forms like Jah, Jahu, being abbreviations of the longer Jahaveh, the longer form was produced by successive modification from the primary monosyllabic *i*. As to this opinion, it is just as conceivable, to say the least, that the full name Jahaveh became contracted into Jahu, Jau, Jo, or Jah, as that the converse process took place. We have a parallel example to illustrate the contracting process,[1] but the lengthening process, especially as described by Delitzsch, seems highly artificial; and, in point of fact, another competent authority,[2] in examining the question whether the name Jahaveh can be traced to Accadian-Sumerian origin, denies that deities of the names Jau and *i* were ever recognised at all in those regions.

[1] As has been pointed out, there is a complete analogy in the form yishtahaveh (יִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה), regularly contracted into yishtāhu (יִשְׁתָּחוּ).

[2] Friedrich Philippi in Ztschr. für Volkerpsychologie u. Sprachwissenschaft (1883), pp. 175-190.

In another way it has been attempted to prove that this name came from the same quarter. It is supposed that Canaanite immigrants who wandered out from the region of the Erythræan Sea[1] and came in contact with Semitic peoples, brought this name with them, and that it was adopted into Semitic. In support of this view it is pointed out that Toi, king of Hamath, in David's time sent his son, named Joram, to salute David (2 Sam. viii. 9), and that the name of this son contains the tetragrammaton in an abbreviated form, just as certain names of Hebrew personages do. There are other isolated cases found on the cuneiform inscriptions; but seeing that they occur at a period when the religion of Jahaveh was long the acknowledged religion of the Hebrews, it is perhaps safer to regard these as isolated instances of what was not uncommon—a non-Semitic people adopting the name of a Semitic god into the circle of their deities. This is the view taken by Baudissin,[2] and also by Schrader, whose cautious remarks, in favour of a concurrent derivation of the name Jahve by the Hebrews and Assyrians, are worth referring to.[3]

(3.) Let us turn now to Egypt and see whether any light can be derived from that quarter. And here we have, (*a*) first the attempts to trace the name itself, as by Röth,[4] who identifies Jahaveh with, or makes it a modification of, the Egyptian Joh, the moon-god. He does not

[1] In proof of such wandering, see König's Hist. Krit. Lehrgebäude der Heb. Sprache, vol. i. (1881) p. 14 f. The proof, he maintains, is not invalidated by Budde, Die Biblische Urgeschichte (1883), p. 329 ff.

[2] Der Ursprung des Gottes namens Ιαω, in his Studien, vol. i. p. 223.

[3] The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Test., Eng. transl., vol. i. p. 23 ff.

[4] Geschichte unserer Abendländischen Philosophie, Erster Band, 2te Auflage (1862), Note 175, p. 143.

explain, however, how it was that the name of a god especially associated with the moon should have been bestowed on a deity of whose connection with the moon we have no trace; and it is very probable that we have here nothing more than a fortuitous coincidence of two names which never had any connection in the minds of those who employed them. (*b*) On the other hand, not a few have thought that the *idea* expressed by the name is to be found in Egyptian sources, and may have been borrowed in Hebrew form by Israel in Egypt. (*a*) Plutarch mentions an inscription on the temple of Isis at Sais, in which a deity is described in terms resembling the "I am that I am" denoted by Jahaveh (Exod. iii. 14); but the ideas conveyed by the two do not, when examined, correspond in the way that it is alleged.[1] (*β*) Others, again, find in the name Jahaveh a Hebrew reproduction (I am that I am) of the Egyptian *nuk pu nuk*.[2] But on this subject we should hear what is said by so competent an authority as Le Page Renouf:[3]

"It is quite true that in several places of the Book of the Dead the three words *nuk pu nuk* are to be found; it is true that *nuk* is the pronoun I, and that the demonstrative *pu* often serves to connect the subject and predicate of a sentence. But the context of the words requires to be examined before we can be sure that we have just an entire sentence before us, especially as *pu* generally comes at the end of a sentence. Now if we look at the passages of the Book of the Dead where these words occur, we shall see at once that they do not contain any mysterious doctrine about the divine nature. In one of these passages the deceased says, 'It is I who know the ways of Nu.' In

[1] König, Hauptprobleme, p. 31, to whom I am indebted for much of the material and many suggestions in this chapter.

[2] So Wahrmund, Babylonierthum, Israelitenthum, Christenthum, p. 219.

[3] Hibbert Lecture for 1879, p. 244 f.

another place he says, 'I am the ancient one in the country [or fields]; it is I who am Osiris, who shut up his father Seb and his mother Nut on that day of the great slaughter.'"

These attempts to derive the name or the idea from Egypt are therefore very precarious.

(4.) Once more, the idea has been put forth that the national God of Israel was first of all the tribal God of the Kenites, with whom Israel came in contact in the wilderness, and to whose family Moses is represented as being related by marriage (Exod. ii. 16; Judges i. 16, iv. 11). This supposition, advanced by Ghillany,[1] has been taken up and advocated by Tiele,[2] and also by Stade.[3] The only shadow of proof I can find for this view as put forth by Stade is, that Moses must have borrowed the name of his deity from some one; and as Jethro was a priest and Moses was in close association with him, the name was simply carried over, and thus marks the continuation of an older faith. Of actual proof that this was so, we have none; and even if we had, we should simply have to go in search of an older source. No proof is given that Jahaveh was the tribal God of the Kenites, nor is any explanation given why the Hebrews, if they had no tribal god before, should have adopted this deity, or, if they had, why they made the exchange at this particular time. It may be urged, moreover, against this supposition, that the

[1] Theologische Briefe an die Gebildeten der deutschen Nation von Richard von der Alm (1862), vol. i. pp. 216, 480. Though Ghillany writes under this pseudonym, the tone of this work, like that which finds expression in his 'Menschenopfer der Hebräer,' is unmistakable. The deity of the Kenites, he says, was the sun—worshipped, however, not as a living bull as in Egypt, but in the form of a metallic image.

[2] Vergelijkende Geschied. van de Egypt. en Mesopot. Godsdiensten, p. 559; Kompendium, § 52.

[3] Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol. i. p. 130 f.

Kenites, though both in the wilderness and in Canaan seen in close friendship with Israel, are always a small body, and occupy somewhat the position of pious sojourners or proselytes; and it seems contrary to the usual way in which even the critical writers explain events, that the larger people should have adopted the god of the smaller tribe.

(5.) Most of the views that have already been mentioned have this in common, that they place the adoption of the Jahaveh religion by the Hebrews at some period anterior to their entrance into Canaan. We have now, however, to look at another explanation, which regards the name of Jahaveh as one gradually adopted with other parts of religious belief and practice from the Canaanites in Palestine.[1] As, however, this view has been successfully attacked by writers of the same general school of criticism, it may be sufficient to refer to what these latter have advanced in the way of refutation. The objections urged by Kuenen against Land[2] deserve special emphasis. He argues as follows: (*a*) It cannot be denied — Land himself admits it — that, in the struggles that took place between the Canaanites and the Israelites, there was involved a contest between the gods of the two peoples; and since at the close of the contest the Israelites and their God were victorious, it cannot be supposed that the deity who thus asserted his superiority was originally of Canaanite origin. Further, (*b*) not only have we, he

[1] This view was independently put forward by Colenso (Pentateuch, Part II. chap. viii.), who afterwards discovered (Part VII. chap. xix.) that he had been anticipated by Hartmann, Von Bohlen, and Von der Alm. It has also been advocated by Dozy (De Israeliten te Mecca, Germ. transl., 1864, p. 39), Land (Theol. Tijdschr., 1868, pp. 156-170), and Goldziher (Mythology among the Hebrews, Eng. tr., pp. 272, 290).

[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. pp. 398-403.

contends, in the names Jochebed (Moses' mother), Joshua (Moses' contemporary), and Jonathan (Moses' grandson) —in all which the name Jo or Jeho enters as an element —an indication that the name was known to the Israelites independently of and prior to their contact with Canaanites; but also the song of Deborah, in which Jahaveh is represented as coming from Seir, furnishes a plain proof that the God of the Israelites was conceived as having His original home outside of Palestine. Lastly, (*c*) he argues rightly that the view under consideration deviates from the whole tenor of Israelite tradition, which gives no support to the supposition that Jahaveh was a God of Canaanite origin. "I will not," he says, "assert that the latter [*i.e.*, the Canaanite origin of the name] must be rejected on this account alone, but I do assert that it is only on strong grounds that it can be accepted. In other words, it must be clearly and irrefragably proved that Jahaveh was really a god of the Canaanites. The evidence with which this is attested must be of such a nature as to leave no room for reasonable suspicion of Israelite or Old Testament influence. But such proof as this is not furnished."[1] The principle which Kuenen here lays down is of wide application,—viz., that the clear testimony of the religious consciousness of Israel—in other words, a persistent tradition—is only to be set aside on the most undoubted positive proof. Kuenen himself is far from observing his own canon, and Wellhausen openly contradicts it;[2] although by rejecting it we cut ourselves away from any firm ground of historical criticism.

[1] In spite of Land's rejoinder in Theol. Tijdschr., iii. Bd., 1869, pp. 347-362, Kuenen's position may be held as proved. So Baudissin has on this point taken Kuenen's side, Studien, vol. i. pp. 213-218.

[2] Hist. of Israel, pp. 318, 319.

Among the writers who seek to derive the name of Jahaveh from a Canaanite source reference may be made to Von Bohlen,[1] who would place the introduction of the name as late as the time of David and Solomon. Some of his arguments are of little force, and he has found few supporters of his view; but there is one argument he employs which, though not valid for his purpose, directs our attention to a fact which is worth noting. He remarks that proper names compounded with the more primitive name of God, El, such as Israel, Samuel, disappear from history more and more from David's time, and that names compounded with Jeho first appear in David's reign or about his time. Now it is a fact that this element does not appear widely in proper names before the time of Samuel. We have the names of Joash, father of Gideon (Judges vi. 11), Jotham, Gideon's son (Judges ix. 5, 7), and Jonathan, grandson of Moses (Judges xviii. 30). Besides these, we have two names before the time of Samuel—viz., Joshua, the companion of Moses, whose name is said to have been changed from Hoshea (Num. xiii. 16), and Jochebed, the mother of Moses (Exod. vi. 20). In view of these it becomes no longer a question as to the introduction of the name Jeho or Jahaveh in the time of David, but how we are to explain its existence in the name of Joshua, Moses' contemporary, or, allowing that to be an altered name, in the name of the mother of Moses. It is known that whereas the Jahavist writer in Genesis freely uses the name Jahaveh in reference to times antecedent to that of Moses, the Elohistic writer retains faithfully the distinction of the periods; but the name of the mother of Moses would lead us to conclude that even before the time when the God of Israel pro-

[1] Introduction to Genesis, Heywood's transl., vol. i. p. 153 f.

claimed His sacred name to Moses at the bush, the name itself had been known beforehand in a narrower circle, or at least in the family of Moses himself. And this view is adopted by many of the best interpreters.[1] On this subject Kuenen says, "Moses can scarcely be supposed to have *invented* the name 'Jahaveh'; in all probability it was already in use, among however limited a circle, before he employed it to indicate El Shaddai, the God of the sons of Israel;"[2] and to the same effect Wellhausen[3] says that Jahaveh was before Moses a designation for El, and that he was originally a god in the family of Moses or in the tribe of Joseph.

On a review of this whole inquiry, therefore, we need not wonder that Kuenen[4] comes to the conclusion that the name is of Israelitish origin. It may be observed in passing that it is somewhat remarkable that the attempt should always be made to derive the religious conceptions of the Hebrews from non-Hebrew sources, without supposing that an influence in the opposite direction may have been exerted, from the Hebrews to their non-Hebrew neighbours. It is no doubt the case that the tradition places the native place of Abraham in Chaldæa, and it is natural to suppose that the progenitors of the Israelites were affected by the thoughts of the time and country from which they came, just as the nation was sensibly affected by contact with Egyptians and Canaanites. It must be remembered, however, that the tradition ascribes Abraham's departure from his native land to religious impulse, and Renan has dwelt

[1] A list of writers who take this view is given by König, Hauptprobleme, p. 27.

[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 279 f.

[3] Hist. of Israel, p. 433.

[4] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 398.

upon the circumstance that religious conceptions remain more pure and elevated among simple nomads than among civilised dwellers in cities.[1] The exhaustive inquiry, however, that has been made by scholars, has its justification in the conclusion to which it comes, that there is no outside source from which it can be shown that the religion of Jahaveh was derived. The use of the name is, at least, as old as the time of Moses; and whether to any extent (which in any case must have been limited) it was known before his time, he has the distinction of having impressed it upon the consciousness of the people of his time in a special way as the designation of their national God, under the aspect in which He was distinctively made known to them, and by them to be exclusively reverenced. The unanimous voice of Israelite tradition is that the declaration, "I am Jahaveh thy God," was made through Moses. There is not the least hint in the recollections of the people that the name was proclaimed by any other person. Between Moses and Samuel there was no time at which we can conceive it to have been introduced; and the time of Samuel itself is but a time of revival and reformation, after which it was not unnatural that the name of the covenant God, to whom the people's heart had again turned, should appear, as has been pointed out, more extensively in the formation of proper names.

In opposition to all attempts at deriving the name or conception from a foreign source, and as showing how it was regarded throughout by the people of Israel as a distinctive possession of the nation, there stands the hard fact that in Scripture Jahaveh is ever the God of Israel alone. According to the views of the Hebrew writers,

[1] Hist. d'Israel, vol. i. chap. iii.

the non-Israelite has no part or right to Jahaveh, but knows only the general name of Elohim, God, or that of his own native deity.[1] In the mouth of such a one the name Jahaveh would denote a strange god—*i.e.*, the god of the people of Israel (cf. 1 Kings xx. 23 with v. 28). So when a Hebrew speaks to a non-Israelite, he is represented as using the name Elohim, and so also when a non-Israelite addresses a Hebrew. And in such cases it is noticeable that the name Elohim is sometimes construed with a plural verb (cf. 1 Sam. iv. 8), the narrator thereby assuming for the time the standpoint of the non-Hebrew speaker or hearer.

This hard fact is not to be set aside by any vague etymological arguments. Even if it were shown to be certain, or even probable, that the name or the conception of Jahaveh was got from some non-Israelite quarter at some time or another in history, it would remain beyond dispute that, on the one hand, the name thus borrowed disappeared from the language and thoughts of the people from which it was derived; and on the other, that it came very soon to be regarded as the exclusive and distinguishing possession of the people who borrowed it —a supposition which, considering the attributes with which Jahaveh was endowed, and the readiness of polytheistic nations to retain the names of any number of gods, especially such as had vindicated themselves as powerful, is not to be entertained.

II. We come now to inquire whether we can determine what precisely was the idea attached to this name among its earliest possessors, so as to discover, if possible, where-

[1] This is well brought out by Tuch in his Comm. to Genesis, second edition, p. xxxii. He refers to these and other passages: Judges i. 7, vii. 14; 1 Sam. iv. 7, 8; Jonah iii. 3, where with verses 5, 8, 9, 10, compare 1 Sam. xxx. 15, xxii. 3.

in the inner potency of the Jahaveh religion consisted. The introduction of a new name we would expect to be accompanied with a new reference, a new attitude, a new mode of regarding the deity; and we naturally ask whether the name itself does not furnish its own explanation.

Those who seek to prove that the religion of Israel was originally a nature religion, in which the powers of nature were deified, explain the name Jahaveh in keeping with this view. Thus Daumer[1] connects the verb from which it is derived with the idea of destroying, and makes Jahaveh "the Destroyer," an idea which suits his notion that Jahaveh and Moloch were originally names for the same deity. The more common view of those who similarly seek the source of the name and idea in nature religion, is that the verb from which the name is derived means to "come down," "fall down," and then in its transitive form "to send down" or "cast down"; according to which Jahaveh would be a *Jupiter tonans*, the Being who casts the thunderbolt, or the lightning, to the earth. In support of this view, we are pointed to the fact that the verb in Arabic (*hawa*), which, letter for letter, corresponds to the Hebrew verb, has the sense of gliding freely, and particularly of gliding or falling down. This sense, it is said, actually attaches to the Hebrew verb itself in one place at least (Job xxxvii. 6), "He saith to the snow, Fall thou on the earth."

The Biblical derivation of the word, as is well known, is from the verb in the sense "to be" or "become." It may be that from such a primary and material sense as that of "falling," the verb in Hebrew came to have the more abstract and secondary meaning of becoming—viz., to

[1] Feuer und Molochdienst, p. 11.

"*fall* out," "happen," "come to pass," as in Gen. vii. 6, "the flood was upon the earth."[1] This is certain, that the sense "to fall" can at most be only detected as adhering to the Hebrew verb, which has, however, appropriated to itself the one signification of becoming. In other words, from the earliest time at which we know the language, this verb was the usual one employed to express the idea of "being," not, however, in the abstract sense of "existence," but in the sense of "becoming"; there was no other verb in the language with that signification; the meaning of "falling," if it originally belonged to it, had almost disappeared; and another verb altogether was employed to express that idea.

We can quite easily comprehend how a verb "to fall," and then "to send down," could, among a polytheistic people, or even a monotheistic people at a primitive stage of culture, furnish the starting-point for a name of the deity. He would then be the Being who "sends down" rain, or thunder, or whatever it might be. The name would stand on the same level, or, I should say, a lower one, than such names as *El*, or *Shaddai*, the "strong one," or *Baal*, *Adon*, "lord," or *Molech*, "ruler"; for any one of these gives a fuller significance to the Being so named. Against this origin of the name among the Hebrews, however, we have, besides the fact that there is no proof whatever of the Hebrews adopting a god of that name from Arabic tribes as Stade will have it, or of their attaching such an idea to the name of their national

[1] For the idea of being and becoming, the Hebrew uses almost exclusively *hayah* היה, *hawah* הוה being found in that sense only in poetic archaic passages; as in Gen. xxvii. 29, where Jacob is blessed by Isaac, "Be lord over thy brethren," also Isa. xvi. 4, the oracle on Moab. Later writers are influenced by Aramaic.

god, the stronger fact just alluded to, that the verb had appropriated to itself the sense of *be, become,* which would be transitively to *cause.* That is to say, assuming that such a name was formed or introduced at some historic time, at some time when the language contained the roots or stems it now possesses, the mere utterance of the name would call up in the mind of the hearer the idea of being, becoming, causing. And this is very much the same as saying that the person who introduced it wished to convey by it that meaning, since he could not but have seen that it would suggest such an idea. To attach to the name the other and more physical signification, would necessitate some proof that the name is of much older origin than the time of Moses, older than the language in the form in which we have it; and that—if the primary meaning of descender or sender down attached to it—there must have been a constant effort in the mind to retain this antiquarian idea, and to exclude another which was soon suggested and *which was more exalted.* For it is a point of the greatest significance here, that the other names of God found among the Hebrews and their neighbours are connected with stems which are in the language and have a precise and intelligible meaning. On this line of reasoning, then, I should conclude, that from the time that the verb to be, to become, was a regular constituent element of the language, the name Jahaveh must of necessity, if it was later than the verb, have partaken of that signification. Either the name Jahaveh was directly formed from an existent verb "to be"; or it was formed from a verb having the meaning to descend which meaning, however, was, if not obliterated, yet certainly overshadowed, at the earliest known stage of the language, by another sense.

Of course this argument proceeds on the assumption that those who used the name, or at least the thoughtful part of the nation when they used it, attached to it *some* signification, which is surely very likely, and in analogy with such names as Moloch and Baal, which could not but keep in the mind the ideas of kingship or lordship. It would surely be an extraordinary supposition that the Hebrews had got hold of a non-Hebrew name for their deity which they used for a time without attaching to it any sense at all, and then read into it a meaning suggested by its resemblance to a common verb in the language. It is not certainly to be concluded that the bare etymological meaning and no more would always adhere to a word; but if this name Jahaveh starts from the idea of being, or must have suggested that idea at its first use, the expansion of the conception in the minds of thinking persons would be in the line of the primary meaning.

Now, as we have already seen, the name was introduced at what the tradition makes a pretty advanced stage in the development of the religion. By the time of Moses the whole patriarchal phase of it had run its course; and, according to the Biblical account, the earlier conception of the deity had been expressed by the terms El and Shaddai, embodying the simpler ideas of strength, power. Stade himself tells us that in the pre-Mosaic religion, the name *El* was used to denote the native spirit or spirits, and the name *Elohim* is certainly old. And just as the abstract idea of being, or transitively the idea of causing, is one that comes comparatively late in consciousness, or at least does not come at the primitive stage, so the introduction of the name of Jahaveh, "He who will be," or "who will cause to be," marks a point of advance in the conception of the national God. It is therefore fitly placed in the time

of Moses; for it cannot be denied that, as the whole consciousness of Israel looked back to the period of the exodus as a new era in their national life, so the belief that Jahaveh was their God from Egypt onwards, as it is expressed by Hosea, was deeply rooted in the nation's mind and heart.

It seems to me that the frank recognition of this fact, so firmly embedded in the national life and literature, would go far to explain the striking phenomena which criticism has brought into clear light; and, on the other hand, that the refusal to accept it frankly has led modern writers to the precarious shifts and extravagant positions which mark the course of their disquisitions. They look for development, but they will not look for it at the right place. Instead of accepting the fact, that in the patriarchal period there was already a knowledge of God, at least on a level with, and presumably higher than, that of the polytheistic nations around Israel, they insist on finding the transition from the barest animal religion going on in a period after that stage had, for the enlightened part of the nation, passed away. Instead of accepting the fact that the name Jahaveh denotes a high stage achieved, they insist on starting with that name as embodying the most primary conceptions; and in tracing the development of the conception in the hands of the prophets, they neglect the clue given to the development in the possession of the name itself. I take my stand upon the assumption that this name must have had some meaning, some suggestion, to the thinking portion of the people, and must have, to an appreciable extent, controlled the conceptions of God which were raised in the mind by the mention of the name. There were other names—El, Elohim, Shaddai, Elyon, Baal, Molech—all of which may have

been used to denote deity; but each and all of them have a specific meaning attached to them, and Jahaveh must have also had its meaning, a specific meaning; and being a special proper name, must have been intended to denote all the others put together, nay, more than all the others combined, else there would have been no reason for the introduction of a new name. The question is, What *was* that meaning? If the name meant merely "the one that sends down rain" or "thunderer," I submit that that does not go beyond El or Shaddai, and would not therefore entitle Jahaveh to be selected as the highest name that the best could bestow on God. There is the verb "to become" lying patent as a verb with which to connect a name which comes to supplement or to comprehend all the other names. And the name is put at the very period when the nation's consciousness of a destiny before it is represented as appearing. All this cannot be fortuitous, nor is it likely to have occurred as a happy thought to the early writers who have left us these traditions. The conclusion seems well justified, that, with the use of the name Jahaveh, the idea seized the mind of Moses and his successors that the God they worshipped was one of ever-developing potency, an ever self-manifesting, ever actively-defending God, whose character was not so much denoted by a quality as by a constant activity, or rather (judged by the analogy of similar personal names) by a person ever active; that in fact, as a nation does not die, so their national God would ever be with them. The name comes in at a definite historical crisis in the nation's life, and was meant to indicate that the deity so named was concerned, not merely with natural phenomena, but with national and historical events.

Let us try to think of Moses proclaiming to his people

a new name that they had never heard before, or heard only as the name of the sender of the lightning, and his saying to Israel—and with effect—"this Thunderer is to be your only God for all time coming." The question would naturally arise, "Who is Jahaveh that *we* should serve Him? We know what is meant by a 'Strong One,' a 'Lord,' a 'Master,' a 'Most High One' (for kindred nations had called their gods by such names as far back as we have knowledge, and why should the Hebrews be placed beneath them in intelligence?). But who is the sender of rain or of thunder any more to us than the deity we already worship? What is He to us, or what are we to Him in particular, that we should be thus wedded together?" The only answer that he could conceivably have given to such most obvious questions is, that Jahaveh had done something for them to claim their regard. People do not set up gods for nothing. What then had Jahaveh done for them? Wellhausen comes to our aid (though Stade refuses to go so far), and tells us that the people had experienced His power in the deliverance from Egypt.[1] This is a reasonable account to give; but it only raises another question, "Who was this that interfered on behalf of a nation of slaves in Egypt, and why did He interfere?" And the only answer that all these questions admit of is just the Biblical answer, "The God of our fathers hath appeared to me:" in other words, there is a linking on of the deliverance of the present to the recollections of the past; the God of Abraham is not dead, but alive and acting on behalf of Abraham's seed; and

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, pp. 429-433; cf. here Kuenen, Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 276 ff. Stade will not even admit that the Israelites, in any appreciable sense, ever sojourned in Egypt. "If any Hebrew clan dwelt in Egypt," he says, "no one knows its name."—Geschichte, vol. i. p. 129.

in commemoration of the new deliverance, and to mark a new era, He receives or adopts a new name, distinctive from mere appellations of deity generally, and the God of pre-Mosaic times is the same God in fuller manifestation still. Moses, says Prof. A. B. Davidson, "stamped an impress upon the people of Israel which was never effaced, and planted seeds in the mind of the nation which the crop of thorns that sprang up after his death could not altogether choke. Of course, even he did not create a nation or a religious consciousness in the sense of making it out of nothing. When he appealed to the people in Egypt in the name of Jehovah their God, he did not conjure with an abstraction or a novelty. The people had some knowledge of Jehovah, some faith in Him, or His name would not have awakened them to religious or national life. In matters like this we never can get at the beginning. The patriarchal age, with its knowledge of God, is not altogether a shadow, otherwise the history of the exodus would be a riddle. Moses found materials, but he passed a new fire through them, and welded them into a unity; he breathed a spirit into the people, which animated it for all time to come; and this spirit can have been no other than the spirit that animated himself."[1]

The importance of dwelling on this question of the meaning attached to the name of Israel's national God in its initial conception and at its first use will be self-evident. It brings to a point the sharp contrast between the Biblical account of the matter and the views presented by writers of the modern critical school. We may say, in a general way, that the various aspects of the pre-prophetic religion, as we have seen them put forward in the preceding chapters, have this in common, that they rep-

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 42.

resent the Jahaveh of pre-prophetic times as a being rather of might than of moral greatness, a nature-God rather than a God of nature, the only national God of Israel indeed, yet, except in this particular, very little if anything different from the gods of the surrounding nations even in the estimation of His own worshippers. Such representations of Jahaveh are the natural development of the initial conception with which these writers start. Wellhausen says[1] that "no essential distinction was felt to exist between Jehovah and El, any more than between Asshur and El;" and Stade tells us that El denotes a superhuman being, though not sharply separated from nature in which he operates. Each place had its El, and the collective Elim or Elohim was the sum of these, or the expression in a plural of majesty, of the power of these superhuman beings.[2] According to the view of these writers, then, the name Jahaveh, given originally to a family or tribal god, either of the family of Moses or tribe of Joseph, as Wellhausen[3] supposes, or of the tribe of the Kenites as Stade thinks, implied no more than El; only, having become current within a powerful circle, it "was on that account all the more fitted to become the designation of a national God."

But if there is any force at all in the considerations that have been put forward, that this name Jahaveh is not of foreign but of Israelitish origin, that as a separate and new name it must have indicated something more than other names already existing, and that in its derivation or immediate suggestion it had the sense of "becoming," then we must demand for the initial stage of the Jahaveh religion a much higher level than the critical school allows.

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 433. [2] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 428.
[3] Hist. of Israel, p. 433.

In addition to this general remark, there are the following points again to be insisted on:—

(1.) There is absolutely no proof that Jahaveh was originally the name of a family or tribal god in the sense understood by these writers. Even if the name of the mother of Moses be taken as an indication that the name was known in the circle of his family, there is no proof that it denoted no more than El or a superhuman nature-spirit.

(2.) And then no reason is assigned for the name Jahaveh superseding El or the Elim, if, according to the hypothesis, it signified no more than these names. Dillmann remarks[1] that wherever an actual change in the religion of a people takes place, there is ever a historical consciousness of the fact preserved among them. The assertion that this name was a special name of El, which had become current in a powerful circle, and on that account was all the more fitted to become the designation of a national god, is, in the first place, destitute of historical proof, and, in the second place, most improbable. If the introduction of the name was connected with some striking event, such as the exodus, we should expect the name to mark an advance—as the Biblical writers represent—on the conception; but according to the modern view, Jahaveh still remains a nature-God: although a national God, His attributes are almost entirely physical.

(3.) In the next place, though the proofs from Scripture which Stade, for example, advances in support of his picture of the character of the pre-prophetic Jahaveh, are selected and manipulated in the extraordinary fashion to which reference has already been made,[2] yet it is exceed-

[1] Ursprung der Alttestl. Religion, p. 6, quoted by Baudissin, Jahve et Moloch, p. 77.

[2] In chap. viii. p. 205.

ingly difficult to form a conception of the character he seeks to delineate. He roams at will over Genesis, the historical books, and even the prophets, finding in later productions proofs of a low tone, and in the earlier books proofs of a high tone of religious thought, till it is absolutely impossible to make out what the initial conception of Jahaveh, in his theory, could have been. An example may be taken from his treatment of the story of Elijah. At one time, in the midst of his argument to prove that Jahaveh's power was confined to His own land, he tells[1] us that Elijah, who fights valiantly in the land of Israel against the worship of Baal, yet goes and lives with a widow at Sarepta, who must have been a Baal-worshipper, and eats her food, which would be consecrated by offering to Baal—touches for which there is absolutely no warrant, and which make the character of the "prophet of fire," as drawn by the narrator, simply incomprehensible. Presently he tells us that in this same story of Elijah the belief finds expression that Jahaveh accompanies His worshippers in their wanderings, for He performs miracles at Sarepta at the prophet's request, and sends him back to his own land.[2] This same belief, he says, is expressed in the promise to be with Jacob (Gen. xxviii. 15, J.), in His being with Joseph in Egypt (Gen. xxxix. 2, J.), and in His going down to Egypt with Jacob (Gen. xlvi. 3 f., J. and E.) And in order to prove the same thing he refers to a passage as late as Isaiah xix., where the prophet speaks of Jahaveh riding on a swift cloud and coming to Egypt, and the idols being moved at his presence. Similarly he proceeds in speaking of Jahaveh's power. The conceptions of all-mightiness and omniscience, we are

[1] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 430. [2] Ibid., p. 431.

told, are not yet reached. That He was not regarded as knowing *all* things is seen from the patriarchal stories, which speak, for example, of God going down to Sodom to see whether its condition was such as the cry represented it.[1] Still the same God knows Sarah's thoughts, and the belief in the oracle shows that He was regarded as having a knowledge of secrets such as children ascribe to God. His power came in the same way to be represented by the religious sentiment as adequate to anything, as appears in the saying, "Is anything too hard for Jahaveh?" (Gen. xviii. 14); and in that other saying, "There is no restraint to Jahaveh to save by many or by few" (1 Sam. xiv. 6). So He performs wonders, shakes the earth, overthrows cities, punishes His land with famine and plague, and slays men without any apparent disease. One other example may be given of Stade's reasoning. The preponderance of the idea of might in the conception of God, he says, combined with the fact that in a primitive age the difference between evil and misfortune was not apprehended, hindered men from regarding Jahaveh as a Being who always acted for moral ends. Traces of a higher conception are not indeed wanting in the pre-prophetic age. Jahaveh, as the defender of His people and of the land, is the guardian of moral customs, the avenger of broken covenants, and so far as concerns the relations of one Israelite to another, His will is the expression of moral and just rule.[2] Thus He avenges a broken oath, and fulfils the prayer of the unjustly oppressed. Especially is He the avenger of innocent blood, which cries to Him from the ground (Gen. iv. 10, xlii. 22, E.) So, as He is the God of the land, He maintains law and order in it, punishing—*e.g.*, Sodom and Gomorrah

[1] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 432. [2] Ibid., p. 434.

—for breaking it. By such advances as these the idea of holiness was enlarged and purified in later times. But in earlier times these ideas did not extend to the general course of events, and to the relation of Israelites to non-Israelites and the surrounding world. In such matters moral conceptions are so little apparent, that God is the author even of evil. Men had not reached the belief in a world in which imperfection was necessarily involved, and of evil left for a time even for the sake of the good. Accordingly, when we would say God permits this or that, the ancient Israelite said straight out that Jahaveh did it.[1] Evil and misfortune are expressed by one word, *raʿ*; and Amos says (iii. 6), "Is there evil in the city, and Jahaveh has not done it?" And not only outward calamities, but the evil passions and inner impulses of men, are ascribed to Jahaveh; and, as among heathen nations, He is believed to make people mad, or leads them on to do things which will bring down His own wrath. Thus the schism of the kingdoms, the greatest misfortune to Israel, was from Jahaveh (1 Kings xii. 15). So He sends a lying spirit among the prophets of Ahab, that the king may be led to go confidently against Ramoth-Gilead, and only the prophet Micah remains unmoved (1 Kings xxii. 20 ff.) So He sends an evil spirit between Abimelech and the Shechemites. And that this is not merely or in all cases a punishment for former transgression, is proved by the remarkable passage (1 Sam. xxvi. 19) in which David says to Saul, "If Jahaveh hath stirred thee up against me, let him accept an offering; but if it be men, let them be accursed of Jahaveh."

This kind of reasoning may be carried out indefinitely, but though it may make a big book, it does not amount

[1] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 435.

to a strong argument. Stade does not or will not see that by thus heaping together texts referring to different periods within or beyond the prophetic period indiscriminately, he is destroying the position he holds that the prophetic religion is an advance on the pre-prophetic. And when he finds in such a writer as Amos, or even Isaiah, instances of the lower type of conception, what becomes of the position that higher types found in Genesis, *e.g.*, are "signs of advance" or "breaking down" of narrow views? What we want to know is the alleged initial stage at which the national God was no more than *El*, a nature-God; and instead of this we get this mixing up of early and late which is quite unintelligible. The truth is, the difficulty he finds in reconciling the contradictory or conflicting statements of contemporaneous authorities arises simply from the fact that the "higher" or moral conception is present from the first. In opposition to all this kind of reasoning I would take my stand upon the reasonable principle, that in writings belonging practically to the same period the lower expressions are to be controlled by the higher, and that one statement in plain terms should outweigh any amount of metaphorical or figurative language. The Hebrew writers employ the boldest anthropomorphisms, for example; but as Stade himself says, this was a necessity for people unaccustomed to philosophical speculation: it is more, it is a necessity of religious language. Nor are they afraid to employ the most simple and childlike expressions; but there is ever the absence of gross conceptions, and ever and anon the utterance of the most exalted ideas, showing what the essential character of Jahaveh, in their opinion, was. Side by side with the boldest anthropomorphisms are found the most spiritual expressions, and the same

writers who speak of Jahaveh as having a local seat ascribe to Him control over all the nations of the world. In view of all this it is sheer trifling to explain the one set of expressions as remnants of a belief in a nature-God, and the other as signs of a breaking down of narrow views. The Hebrew writers, from the earliest times at which we have access to their words, are on a higher plane of thought than the modern critics will allow; and just because they are so firmly fixed there, they do not hesitate to employ the boldest pictorial or metaphorical language to express their thoughts.

CHAPTER XII.

ETHIC MONOTHEISM.

The great objection to the modern account of the Jahaveh religion—I. Necessity of postulating moral elements in Jahaveh's character, and how their origin is explained by Stade—Distinctive features in the Jahaveh religion as stated by him—Jealousy, and sole reverence—Examination of this: (1) *Are these really distinctive?* (2) *If they are really so, the theory is at fault, for no sufficient explanation of their origin is given—II. Transition to ethic monotheism—Distinction of monolatry and monotheism—Proofs of monolatry—Jephthah—First Commandment—Naming of gods of the nations—Kuenen's argument examined—Popular conception of power nourished by political events—Agreement of prophets with popular idea in fundamental principles—Rise beyond this on the appearance of the Assyrian power—Appeal again to earliest writing prophets, in whom monotheism is not nascent, but fully developed—The prophets claimed to be the true interpreters of the fundamental principles of the religion—The attribute of* grace *or* love *which is made central by Hosea, gives the explanation of the origin of the popular and the prophetic views.*

The difficulties in the way of accepting the modern account are seen to be greatest when we inquire what it was that distinguished the Jahaveh religion from the religions of neighbouring nations. We are told *ad nauseam* the points in which it resembled them; one feature after another is toned down to the level of nature or national religion. Yet the pre-prophetic religion must

have had something distinctive to mark out the Israelites from their neighbours, and give them the pride in their national faith which they possessed. It must have contained, moreover, some germ which by way of development enabled it to rise to the so-called ethic monotheism of the prophets. We must now examine the modern theory as to these elements.

I. Stade, in drawing his picture of the pre-prophetic Jahaveh as a national deity evolved from a nature-God, is bound, as we have seen, to put in here and there features of a more elevated and moral character. All that he can say as to the origin of these higher conceptions is, that they arise not from mental reflection, but from religious feeling and impulse. In this way, for example, "the feeling arises" that Jahaveh, although the God of the land of Israel only, will accompany His worshipper into a foreign country; and also "the confidence arises" that He will be more powerful than the gods of the heathen, just as Israel itself, when in captivity, bursts its bonds. These two ideas blend into the conviction that Jahaveh, brought willingly or by force into a strange land, will there show His power by inflicting evil on the heathen gods, as happened to Dagon at Gath, and as is indicated in the passage of Isaiah to which reference has already been made. And, more particularly, he strives to find, amid all the features that are common to Jahaveh and the heathen gods, some distinctive characteristics which will ensure the Jahaveh religion having an independent existence and a possible development. In this connection he lays particular stress on two things:—

(1.) While the early Israelite conceptions of Jahaveh's power and holiness are in strict analogy with the heathen conception of their gods, there is one element, he says, which distinguishes the religion of Israel. The anger

of Jahaveh takes the form of jealousy of the worship of any other God; which worship He avenges and punishes. And this idea, which attains its full development in the teaching of the prophets, is an element of the Mosaic religion. On Stade's theory the power of Jahaveh is first of all thought of as a terrifying attribute, for He is the God of the storm, and the idea is not for some time reached that divine might must be exercised on the side of good. His holiness also is merely majesty jealous of its honour, and insisting on due reverence, so that the bounds between Him and man are not to be trespassed with impunity. Instances illustrating this are found in the judgments that befell the people of Beth-shemesh and Uzzah, for looking into or touching the ark, the symbol of His presence; and the idea is found as late as Isaiah (viii. 14), who speaks of a sanctuary as an object of terror.[1] This representation of Jahaveh, however, assumes a milder form and kindlier aspect from the fact that He is Israel's God, and will defend His own people. But it is to be noted that, while He is true and faithful to His own, the counterpart of His faithfulness to Israel is His anger against Israel's foes. This is seen chiefly in war. The oldest monument of Hebrew poetry, the song of Deborah, represents Him as coming from Sinai to discomfit the army of Sisera, and Meroz is cursed because it did not come to the help of the Lord against the mighty.[2] A trace of the same idea is found in the title of the 'Book of the Wars of Jahaveh,' and in Abigail's speaking of David fighting Jahaveh's battles. So the ark, according to the oldest views, was taken into the battle, and Jahaveh was the "Lord of hosts."

(2.) Another fundamental point of difference between

[1] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. p. 434. [2] Ibid., p. 437.

the pre-prophetic religion of Israel and heathen systems, according to Stade, is this:[1] Whereas in Greece, Rome, and Egypt, the worship of ancestors and reverence for founders of tribes remained alongside the worship of the gods—the latter remaining at the head of what came to be a family, consisting of gods, half-gods, and heroes, so that the inferior gods really came to receive the greater homage from the mass of the people—this development never took place in Israel. They have no mythology, and the reason is that Jahaveh did not admit the worship either of ancestors or of heavenly bodies along with His own. His worship is directly opposed to such, and so gradually eliminated it. And we have neither the slightest trace in Israel of Jahaveh being regarded as a *primus inter pares*, nor of His having a consort as Baal had in Astarte.

This distinguishing feature of the Jahaveh religion, Stade concludes, cannot be traced to any peculiarity in the Semitic race, for other members of the Semitic family exhibit polytheism exactly like that of Greece. It can only be explained on the supposition that from the moment Israel received the Jahaveh religion His character was differently apprehended from that of the polytheistic gods. But when we expect him to tell us what the element in Jahaveh's *character* was which thus distinguished Him, this is what he tells us: The distinguishing thought which made this religion of Jahaveh different from these can only have been that Jahaveh was the only God of Israel, and therefore His worship excluded that of all other gods. Had not this idea been firmly held from the beginning, considering the temptations that lay on every side, from the time the tribes entered Canaan, to polytheistic views, the result could not

[1] Geschichte, vol. i. p. 438 f.

have been the view of Jahaveh's unity that came to prevail. It goes back for initiation to the founder of the religion. This much is due to the work and the thought of Moses.[1]

These statements of Stade deserve to be well weighed. They suggest two questions:—

(1.) Are the points which he marks out as distinctive of the Jahaveh religion actual points of difference from other Semitic religions as these are understood by himself? He and other writers of his school are never tired of telling us that Jahaveh was the God of Israel or of Canaan, just as Chemosh was the god of Moab. And Kuenen says plainly[2] that though Jahaveh was believed by Israel to be mightier than the gods of other nations, there was nothing in this to distinguish the Israelite religion, for this was the belief of the Moabite with regard to Camosh (Chemosh), and of the Ammonite with regard to Malcám (Moloch). As to the national god being able to follow his worshipper and defend him in a strange land, the inscription of Salmsézab, referred to by Renan, is urged in proof that this was a common belief. As to its being a distinction that Jahaveh was at the first declared to be the sole deity to be reverenced in Israel, the neighbouring nations also had each their national and exclusive god. If Stade should reply that these nations admitted the recognition and worship of other gods alongside their national god, why, this is the very thing that he and his school say the Israelites all did up to the time of the prophets. It is they also who point to the obscure passage in the book of Kings to prove that the god of the Moabites was stirred up by the horrible sacrifice of the king's first-born to defend his own people; so that the jealousy of one national god against another, which Stade makes a distinctive

[1] Geschichte, vol. i. p. 439.

[2] National Religions, p. 118.

mark of the Jahaveh religion, is, on his own principle, a common belief.

(2.) If these points *are* really distinctive of the Jahaveh religion in any significant sense, then what becomes of the whole position of Stade and his school, that the Jahaveh religion was at first a mere nature-worship? On this ground it is not a question of showing how pre-prophetic Jahavism was purified and exalted by the prophets; it is a question of explaining this *initial* distinctiveness which runs back to Mosaic times. How can Stade explain the manner in which a mere nature-god was adopted by Israel, and made from the beginning the sole object of worship? When he says that the character of Jahaveh was from the first differently apprehended from that of the heathen gods, this is just what the Biblical writers say. But when he goes on to say that the distinguishing thing was that this God alone was to be Israel's God, he is giving no adequate explanation. The question is, Why was Jahaveh regarded as Israel's God to the exclusion of all others? and Stade answers, Because from the first He was so regarded. Surely it was something in His character, something that He did or was believed to have done, that gave Him this pre-eminence. But Stade, held fast in his naturalistic theory, cannot admit this, and so lands himself in helpless confusion. The distinctive elements of the Jahaveh religion, as he puts them, are not distinctive at all; or if they are, they are distinctive in a much higher sense than he ascribes to them.

II. The modern theory, it seems to me, thus breaks down utterly at this the initial point; and I do not think it can establish itself any more successfully in explaining the development at the other end—*i.e.*, in accounting for

the alleged transition from belief in a merely national god to the "ethic monotheism," as it is called, of the prophets. On this subject writers of the modern critical school[1] draw an intelligible distinction between monolatry and monotheism—*i.e.*, the worship of one God, and the belief that there *is* only one God.[2] The ancient Israelites, says Stade, were theoretically polytheists, but practically monotheists: they believed in the existence of Chemosh, the god of Moab; of Milkom (Moloch), the god of the Ammonites; and Baalzebub, the god of the Ekronites, and others, just as they believed in the existence of Jahaveh, their own God. The distinction which they drew was not between God and idols, or between God and no-gods, but between Jahaveh and the "gods of the nations." This explains the expression "the God of the Hebrews" (Exod. iii. 18, &c.), and the other expression, "Jahaveh the God of Israel" (Judges xi. 21, &c.), and even the mode of speaking of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The idea of a universe, he says, was beyond the comprehension of a people who knew only the countries round about Canaan; and the passages that represent God as the Creator of all things are the product of later times. Such passages as Amos v. 8, 9, which are from an *early* book, are inconvenient for this theory, and accordingly are set aside as disturbing the progress of the discourse, and probably not genuine.[3] But this is a trifle.

The argument at first sight seems forcible, but on examination it will be found not to sustain the position which it is used to support. No doubt the Biblical writers continually speak of the gods of the nations by name, as if they believed in their existence and operation. So

[1] Stade, Geschichte, vol. i. pp. 428 ff., 507. [2] See Note XXI.
[3] Kuenen, National Relig., p. 113. Comp. above, chap. vi. p. 146.

does Milton in his 'Paradise Lost.' The passage (Judges xi. 24) in which Jephthah says to Moab, "Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess?" seems to be quite decisive on this point; and so it has been referred to constantly from Vatke[1] to Wellhausen[2] to prove that originally "Israel is a people just like other people, nor is even his relationship to Jehovah otherwise conceived of than is, for example, that of Moab to Chemosh." But, as Dr Davidson has pointed out,[3] Wellhausen invalidates his own argument when in another place[4] he makes this whole passage an interpolation based on Numbers xxi. 29, which would bring it well down in the age of the canonical prophets. Indeed, as Davidson points out, there is a passage of Jeremiah (xlviii. 7) which would prove that even he believed in the godhead of Chemosh,—a proof that such a mode of reasoning has no force.

So, too, the language of the Decalogue, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," may seem at first sight to imply that the *existence* of other gods was taken for granted, only that Jahaveh alone was to be worshipped by Israel. On this I cannot do better than quote the thoughtful words of Dr Davidson:—

"To our minds such a statement as this, that Israel shall have no God but Jehovah, immediately suggests the inquiry, whether there be any other god but Him. But such questions might not present themselves to minds of a different cast from ours and in early times, for our minds are quickened by all the speculations about God which have filled the centuries from the days of Moses to our own. We may not have evidence that the mind of Israel in the earliest time put these general and abstract questions to itself. But we are cer-

[1] Bibl. Theol., p. 258.
[2] Hist. of Israel, p. 235.
[3] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 49.
[4] See Bleek's Einleitung, 4te Aufl., p. 195.

tainly entirely precluded from inferring from the form of the first commandment that the existence of other gods was admitted, only that Israel should have none of them. For if we consider the moral element of the Code, we find the commandments all taking the same negative form; but who will argue that when Moses said to Israel, Thou shalt not kill, he made murder unlawful merely in Israel, without feeling that it was unlawful wherever men existed?"[1]

The truth is, we have here to do with an instance of the imperfection of language and the freaks the human mind plays in the use of names. How was an Israelite to speak of the heathen gods unless by using their names? And as soon as we give a thing a name, it has a certain existence for us. St Paul tells us how hard it was for Christians in his day, accustomed to the names of heathen gods, to grasp the fact that "an idol is nothing in the world;"[2] and even at the present day, I doubt very much whether the majority of people who speak of Jupiter and Apollo consciously carry in their minds the conviction that these are mere names of what never had existence.[3] The early preachers of Christianity in pagan countries had the utmost difficulty in rooting out the belief in heathen gods. So long as the names lingered, the unsophisticated mind assigned to the *numen* an actual existence; and hence, perhaps, we may explain how the missionaries and their converts turned these pagan objects of worship into demons or evil spirits. We need not wonder, in the face of this psychological phenomenon, if the simple-minded Hebrews use language that may be drawn into a

[1] Expositor, *l.c.*, p. 44. [2] 1 Cor. viii. 4-7.

[3] An amusing instance of the facility with which the name takes the place of the thing is furnished by Voltaire. In the Latin Bible the witch of Endor is called Pythonissa (in the LXX. Ἐγγαστρίμυθος); and Voltaire argued that since the name Python could not have been known to the Hebrews in the days of Saul, this history cannot have been earlier than the time of Alexander, when the Greeks traded with the Hebrews. One wonders how many of Voltaire's readers perceived his mistake.

wrong sense. If they asked themselves at all what they meant by such language, the common people would be perhaps as perplexed as, *e.g.*, an ordinary person would be if asked to explain what Allah, or Moloch, or Asshur is in his mind. The modern Jew would not admit that his nation's God is the Allah of the Mohammedan; but are we to say that the Jew is not yet a monotheist?[1] I believe it may safely be asserted that there is not a single passage in the Old Testament which can be taken to prove that the leaders of religious thought—prophets and prophetic men—ever regarded Jahaveh as on a level with the gods of the nations, as no more to Israel, no more in the world, than Chemosh or Milcom or Baal to their worshippers. Nay, there is one passage, in an early writing too, which ought to be decisive of this matter. Elijah, on Carmel, is represented as using language in regard to the Phœnician Baal (1 Kings xviii. 27) which, if it is taken as a mockery of the conceptions of the Baal-worshippers, is in striking contrast with even the boldest anthropomorphisms applied by Israelites to their God, and, in any case, shows that this prophet had got very nearly to, if he had not actually apprehended, the truth that "an idol is nothing in the world." This may not be monotheism in an abstract philosophical sense — for religion was to Israel not a product of thought but an instinct —yet it is infinitely more than the bare monolatry of which modern writers speak.

We come now to consider the arguments by which it is sought to be proved how, from a circumscribed national monolatry, in which Jahaveh was regarded as the only God of Israel, there was reached the "ethic monotheism"

[1] Do not we continue to speak of the God of the Christian, although we believe that there is none other?

of the prophets, in which He is viewed as the God of the whole earth, the only God. Here we take for our guide Kuenen, who has devoted a special work[1] to the subject.

In the popular conception, says Kuenen (p. 118), Jahaveh was a great and mighty God, mightier than the gods of other nations. And this popular conception was stimulated and supported by political events. "When David waged the wars of Yahweh with a strong hand (1 Sam. xviii. 17; xxv. 28), and when victory crowned his arms, he made Yahweh Himself rise in the popular estimation, Solomon's glory shone upon the deity to whom he had consecrated the temple in his capital." In this popular conception of their national deity, the attribute of *might* was the principal element. The people no doubt ascribed to their God moral attributes (as is proved by the priestly Torah), but these were only some among many of His attributes, and in the popular conception the stage of an ethical *character* had not been reached (p. 115). Jahaveh as a very mighty One, and Jahaveh inseparably bound to Israel His people, these were the fundamental ideas of the popular religion. In proof of this, Kuenen appeals to the historical books of "the Old Testament—whose authors certainly stood higher in this respect than the great masses." In these books "the idea comes into the foreground more than once, that Jahaveh had to uphold His own honour, and therefore *could not* neglect to protect and bless His people. Thus, in the conception of the people, Yahweh's might, or, if you prefer to put it so, Yahweh's obligation to display His might, must often have overbalanced both His wrath against Israel's trespasses and the demands of His righteousness" (p. 115 f.)

With this popular view the prophets so far agreed,

[1] Hibbert Lecture for 1882, National Religions and Universal Religions.

although on essential points they differed from it. As to the agreement, I quote Kuenen's words (p. 105):[1] "*Yahweh Israel's God, and Israel Yahweh's people!* It surely needs no proof that the canonical prophets endorse this fundamental conception of the popular religion, that not one of them ever thinks of denying it. The whole of their preaching takes this as its starting-point, and leads back to it as its goal. On this latter point I wish to place the utmost emphasis." He then goes on to show that though the prophets looked forward to the extinction of the national life of Israel, and the captivity of the people into a strange land, yet in their mind this was to be followed, sooner or later, by a restoration. This is indeed to be accompanied by a transformation in the people themselves. "But however great the change may be—though the wolf lie down with the lamb and the sucking child play by the adder's hole; nay, though there be new heavens and a new earth, yet the relation between Jahaveh and Israel remains the same" (p. 106 f.) So that the canonical prophets of the eighth and succeeding centuries are not only the legitimate successors of Elijah and Elisha, but it would be a contradicting of these prophets themselves were we to begin by loosening the tie that unites them to the Israelite nation.

"We are indeed doing the prophets ill service if we conceal the fundamental thought of all their preaching. In this respect, *Iliacos intra muros peccatur et extra.* Rationalists have branded as 'particularism,' and supranaturalists have done their best to explain away or evaporate, what is really nothing less than *the very essence of the Israelitish religion*, to which even the greatest prophets could not be untrue without sacrificing that religion itself" (p. 109 f.)

[1] See also Kuenen's Religion of Israel (Eng. trans.), vol. i. p. 219 ff.

And now, having seen to what extent the prophets agreed with the popular religious conceptions of their time, we have to consider in what respects, according to Kuenen, they differed from them. For there is no doubt that in essential points they stood opposed to the religious opinions of their day, and held views that brought them into sharp antagonism with not only the common people, but even the official heads of the nation. "The prophets," says Kuenen (p. 73), "while admitting the national worship of Jahaveh as a fact, nevertheless condemn it from time to time in the strongest terms. It answers in no degree to their ideal."

"The images of Yahweh which adorned most of the bamoth as well as the temples at Dan and Beth-el, imply that the ideas men had of Him were crude and material in the extreme. Of the religious solemnities we know little, but enough to assert with confidence that they embodied anything but spiritual conceptions. Wanton licence on the one hand, and the terror-stricken attempt to propitiate the deity with human sacrifices on the other, were the two extremes into which the worshippers of Yahweh appear by no means exceptionally to have fallen. No one will undertake to defend all this, especially as at that very time there was already another and a higher standard in ancient Israel opposed to the lower, and judging it" (p. 75 f.)

What then was this "ideal," this "higher standard," in ancient Israel which the prophets had got hold of? The true prophet, we are told (p. 112), was, as Jeremiah characterises him (Jer. xxviii. 8, 9), a prophet of evil. And why? Because he was "the preacher of repentance, the representative of Yahweh's strict moral demands amongst a people that but too ill conforms to them." That is to say, holiness is now no longer one attribute among many others, as it was in the popular conception: "in the consciousness of the prophets, the central place

was taken, not by the might but by the holiness of Yahweh. Thereby the conception of God was carried up into another and a higher sphere (p. 119)." And "as soon as an ethical *character* [as distinguished from merely a moral attribute among others] was ascribed to Yahweh, He *must* act in accordance with it. The Holy One, the Righteous One, might renounce His people, but He could not renounce Himself" (p. 115 f.)

"This profoundly ethical conception of Yahweh's being," Kuenen proceeds to reason (p. 114), "could not fail to bring the prophets into conflict with the religious convictions of their people." For whereas the latter had emphasised the attribute of might, and relied upon the fact that Yahweh and Israel were inseparable, so that He was bound to help them, even at the expense of His holiness, the prophets put it differently — that, being above all things holy, He was bound to assert His holiness even at the expense of His people. Thus, when the people, as troubles gathered on the political horizon, thought they could appease their God and secure His favour by more numerous and costly sacrifices and multiplied vows (p. 115), reckoning with certainty (Micah iii. 11) upon the help of the God who was in their midst, or when in straits they cast about for new help, lavishing even sacrifices of their own children (p. 122), the prophets denounced such confidence as vain, and saw in the very troubles that came upon the nation the righteous hand of Yahweh Himself, asserting not only His might, but pre-eminently His holiness against an ungodly nation. Thus the two modes of viewing political events and national experience were diametrically opposed. The one, the popular view, based its faith on earthly prosperity and success. "But," says Kuenen (p. 118 f.), "it lies in the

nature of the case that a faith reared upon such foundations was subject to many shocks, and under given circumstances might easily collapse. Born of the sense of national dignity, growing with its growth and strengthening with its strength, it must likewise suffer under the blows that fell upon it, must pine and ultimately die when, with the independence of the nation, national self-consciousness disappeared." The other, the prophetic view, making Yahweh's holiness His central attribute, and ascribing to Him an *ethical character*, was not dependent on the fluctuations of political events. "When others," says Wellhausen, "saw only the ruin of everything that is holiest, they saw the triumph of Jehovah over delusion and error;" to which Kuenen adds (p. 124):—

> "What was thus revealed to their spirit was no less than the august idea of the *moral government of the world*—crude as yet, and with manifold admixture of error, but pure in principle. The prophets had no conception of the mutual connection of the powers and operations of nature. They never dreamed of the possibility of carrying them back to a single cause or deducing them from it. But what they did see, on the field within their view, was the realisation of a single plan—everything, not only the tumult of the peoples, but all nature likewise, subservient to the working out of one great purpose. The name "ethical monotheism" describes better than any other the characteristics of their point of view, for it not only expresses the character of the one God whom they worshipped, but also indicates the fountain whence their faith in Him welled up."

Thus then, though the prophets were regarded by their contemporaries as speaking nothing less than blasphemy (p. 117) when they declared that Jerusalem should be destroyed and its people carried into captivity, and though in effect they were the destroyers of the old national religion, yet they were led by the contemplation of political

events, and by the working out of their own ethical conceptions, to lay the foundations of a religion of world-wide application and significance. They still held to the inseparability of Jahaveh and Israel; but in their glowing descriptions of the blessings of the coming age, they represented Israel as no longer the special object of God's care and recipient of His favours, but as the organ and instrument of blessings to the whole world. Thus anticipations which, in the popular conception, were limited, became transformed. "Many of the descriptions of Israel's restoration, and of the *rôle* which the heathen will take therein, have none but literary and æsthetic claims on our admiration" (p. 126); whereas, on the other hand, it lay in the nature of the case that ethical monotheism, even in the period of its genesis, must give a fresh turn to expectations with regard to Yahweh and the peoples. In its full development, of course, this idea of universalism took its highest flight of all, as is seen most conspicuously in the exalted ideas and comprehensive views of the prophets which culminate in the glowing anticipations of the second Isaiah (p. 128).

There is much truth and much suggestiveness in what Kuenen here puts forward. What he says throws much light both on the relation of the prophets to the "popular religion," and also on the gradual progress in the conceptions of the prophets themselves. In speaking of the "popular religion," we must, with Kuenen, admit that "all sincere religion is true religion, and must secure its beneficent result;" that "not in vain did men thank Yahweh for the blessing of harvest, perform their work with eyes fixed upon Him, trust in His help under afflictions, and turn to Him for succour in times of peril"

(p. 76). And in regard to the prophetic religion, we frankly admit that the course of political events taught the prophets much, and that through outward events and the germination of the inner conception which they entertained, they reached purer and more comprehensive views as time went on. But all this does not reach the point we wish to attain. What we wish to know is the best and highest that any in the nation had reached at the earliest times at which we can catch a view of the Jahaveh religion, and how much of that survived as a national inheritance. We wish to know whether the popular religion and the prophetic had not a common starting-point, one source from which they sprang and then separated; we want to know whether this prophetic ideal is not derived from the pre-prophetic times; and if it is not, we wish a definite explanation of its origin and its development out of the lower conceptions to which it stood opposed. And this I think Kuenen with all his ingenuity has not furnished.

1. In the first place, when Kuenen sets down as the very essence of the Israelitish religion the fundamental article on which people and prophets agreed, *Yahweh Israel's God, and Israel Yahweh's people*, he only states in his own way what the Biblical writers one and all insist on, and what the Hebrew historians represent in various fashions as an election or choice of Israel by Jahaveh, or a covenant relation between the two. It is but just to Kuenen to draw attention to the fact that he ascribes to Moses this amount at least of influence on Israel, in saying that "the consciousness that a peculiar and intimate relation existed between the God in whose name Moses came forward and the tribes of Israel, never died out." He would not call this a covenant in the Biblical

sense,[1] and he insists that the conviction went no further than this brief acknowledgment, since Moses failed in impressing on the people his own ideas of God's moral nature. "In one word," he says, "whatever distinguished Moses from his nation remained his personal possession and that of a few kindred spirits. . . . Under Moses' influence Israel took a step forward, but it was only one step."[2] In view, however, of Kuenen's clear recognition of the one fundamental piece of common ground occupied by prophets and people, we are entitled to ask him what was the common conviction from which both started, seeing that both in their respective modes held so tenaciously to it. There must have been some objective fact in the history that gave a start to this common conception, or some point of time at which this relationship was pressed home on the consciousness of the nation, to give it this firm, incontrovertible position with people and prophet alike. And if the conception is synchronous with the adoption of the Jahaveh religion—if, that is to say, as Stade has concluded, from the moment that Jahaveh was accepted as the God of Israel, the impression that He and none but He was to be their god—then we go back to the time of Moses for the common fountain of this conviction. That is to say, at a historical time and under some historical conditions, the whole nation became possessed of the idea that Jahaveh and His people were inseparably

[1] Smend (Moses apud Prophetas, p. 19) says distinctly, "That a covenant was once on Mount Sinai concluded by Moses, is affirmed from of old by the most certain and unanimous tradition." Wellhausen, however, perceiving that the admission of a covenant entered into under definite historical conditions would shatter his system, says that the word for a covenant between Jehovah and His people is not to be found in the older prophets (Hist. of Israel, p. 417 f.) See Note XXII. Cf. below, p. 338.

[2] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 294.

joined to one another. And then the question arises, What were those historical conditions? and which of the two shall we take as the better interpreters of what that relation was—the mass of the unthinking and careless people, or the *élite* of the nation's religious men? Surely an idea held so tenaciously by all classes in common must rest upon something more definite and positive than the mere choice by a nation, or by their leader for them, of some "Thunderer." Kuenen himself is obliged to admit that, even in the popular conception, the idea of holiness was present from the very first, though not as a central attribute. If, then, the conception of holiness was there from the first, are not the prophets more likely than the common people to have preserved, to have inherited from the best of their predecessors, from their spiritual teachers, the *place* of that attribute in Jahaveh's character? The attribute of might never disappeared from the conception which the prophets had, nor can a time be pointed to when the attribute of might existed apart from that of holiness. Since Kuenen and his school feel themselves constrained to postulate a moral attribute from the very first, it is much more reasonable to believe that the thinking and more religious part of the nation would assign to the moral a higher and more central place than to the physical. In brief, the *character* of Jahaveh was moral in its initial conception.

2. In the second place, I think his reasoning is quite insufficient to show that mere political events produced either the popular or the prophetic conceptions. No doubt these nourished the one idea or the other, or stimulated it to greater developments; but something deeper, in the one case and the other, must be assumed, before we can understand either set of phenomena.

The *popular* idea, he says, was stimulated and supported by political events, so that David's wars and Solomon's magnificence reflected a glory upon the national God in the popular estimation;[1] and that is no doubt true in a sense. But it is not so easy to follow him when he goes on to say that the popular conception, born of the sense of national dignity, was bound to suffer under the blows that fell upon it, and ultimately to die, when, with the independence of the nation, national self-consciousness disappeared (p. 119). We are confronted by historical facts that are irreconcilable with this sweeping assertion. If the popular conception was "born of the sense of national dignity," and had no firmer foundation, it would have disappeared long before the time of the Assyrian invasions. There were times in the nation's history when the national fortunes were at the very lowest point, such as the times succeeding Joshua, and the period immediately preceding the appearance of Samuel. If outward reverse had been able to break up the feeling of national consciousness, it was at such times that the thing would have happened. But it did not; and in fact it is just at times of deepest depression that the religious life of Israel makes new departures. Wellhausen, *e.g.*, places the rise of Nabiism in the time when Israel was held down hardest by the Philistines. On Kuenen's own principles, therefore, we are bound to assume that (since a faith born of mere national dignity cannot stand such shocks) the popular faith had something else to sustain it. The popular faith must at these earlier times have had a confidence resting on something else than a mere belief in the arbitrary

[1] National Religions, p. 118. Compare also Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 20.

might of Jahaveh. We conclude, therefore, that what Kuenen calls the prophetic belief must have been in existence from such an early period—was indeed pre-prophetic; that in fact pre-prophetic and prophetic are identical, both resting on some historical experience.

Even more inadequate, in my opinion, is his attempt to prove that the *prophetic* belief was brought about by political events. Kuenen seems to be so well satisfied with Wellhausen's statement of the case here,[1] that he contents himself with repeating his words almost *verbatim*. The passage is as follows:—

"Until the time of Amos there had subsisted in Palestine and Syria a number of petty kingdoms and nationalities, which had their friendships and enmities with one another, but paid no heed to anything outside their own immediate environment, and revolved, each in its own axis, careless of the outside world,[2] until suddenly the Assyrians burst in upon them. They commenced the work which was carried on by the Babylonians, Persians, and Greeks, and completed by the Romans. They introduced a new factor, the conception of the world—the world, of course, in the historical sense of that expression. In presence of that conception, the petty nationalities lost their centre of gravity, brute force dispelled their illusions, they flung their gods to the moles and to the bats (Isa. ii.) The prophets of Israel alone did not allow themselves to be taken by surprise by what had occurred, or to be plunged in despair; they solved by anticipation the grim problem which history set before them. They absorbed into their religion that conception of the world which was destroying the religions of the nations, even before it had been fully grasped by the secular consciousness. Where others saw only the ruin of everything that is holiest, they saw the triumph of Jehovah over delusion and error."

I humbly think that the language here used is badly chosen at the very point where we want the utmost clearness. If the words are to be taken literally, it is little

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 472. Kuenen, National Religions, pp. 120-125.

[2] See Note XXIII.

wonder that the nationalities lost their centre of gravity, or even their gravity itself, over the performance here ascribed to a "conception." A "conception" of the world was introduced by the Assyrians; at its presence the petty nationalities lost their centre of gravity; the prophets of Israel alone did not allow themselves to be taken by surprise; they "absorbed" into their religion that conception, "even before it had been fully grasped by the secular consciousness,"—and the thing was done. Let us, however, try to get behind the phrases and understand the thing that is supposed to have actually happened. The Assyrians appeared upon the narrow stage on which Israel and other little nationalities moved. With their appearance arose the conception of the world in the usual historical sense —*i.e.*, I suppose the petty nationalities came to understand that there was a world much larger than their own circumscribed territory, and agencies at work superior to those with which they were familiar. If the most of the petty nations threw their idols to the moles and to the bats, it would be because they were convinced that these, their own gods, were of no avail to resist the stronger power, which, under the patronage of foreign gods, was trampling down petty nationalities like their own. The "conception," therefore, which is not a thing floating in the air, but a product of reflection, arose in the minds of Israel's neighbours as well as in the minds of the prophets. This is all plain enough; but when we come to the vital point, Why did the prophets of Israel take a different view? we have no explanation of the fact. We are simply told they "absorbed the conception into their own religion, even before it had been fully grasped by the secular consciousness." That is to say, before even the secular consciousness had fully grasped the fact that

there were greater powers outside their narrow confines than their local national gods, the prophets at once started to declare that it was their own national God that was controlling these forces—at once they leaped from the idea of a local national deity to that of a deity controlling the world; or, at all events, they saw a divine plan, a Providence in all these things, which so staggered others. Then, I suppose, it was that the shifting took place in the conception of the attributes of Jahaveh, and He came to be conceived as One with not only moral attributes, but with ethical character. I cannot see that the thing is made any clearer, or that the development is made out. What we want to know is, What enabled the prophets alone to read the signs of the times as they did? Their teaching, in face of the events, is a clear proof that from the first utterance of it they had a higher idea of their God to start with. The solution of the political problem was indeed ready before the problem presented itself, just because the idea of a God whose character was ethical was a much older idea. The earliest writing prophets knew of a God different from the gods of the nations around them; and they themselves speak of such a God as revealing Himself to prophets before them. Even the writer or writers of the patriarchal stories, and the writer of the accounts of Elijah, at a time when there was no threatening of a collapse of the State from foreign invasion, have pure ethical conceptions of Jahaveh, and regard Him as controlling the destinies of the world. The conception of Jahaveh as a Ruler of the world is much older than the time in which Kuenen and his school would place it; and it is in vain that we ask the outward events of the history to give an explanation of that religious conscious-

ness which, from the earliest times, underlies all these events.

3. But in the third place, let us leave abstract inquiries into what must have happened, and this subtle following of the movement of a conception: let us come to actual facts. If it be true that the appearance of the Assyrians gave the first impulse to this wider view, the view is so far removed from what is called the pre-prophetic conception that we ought to see it growing under our eyes. At the Assyrian period, we have the contemporary writings of Amos and Hosea; and from them onwards, we have the writings of other prophets who lived through the trying times of the Assyrian invasions, and down to the Babylonian captivity. Amos speaks only in the vaguest terms of the great Assyrian power; Isaiah saw it in the land; Jeremiah witnessed the final collapse of Israelite independence. We ought to be able to trace the gradual expansion of the prophetic view, from its first stage to its last. Now what do we find? We find indeed an advance from Amos to Jeremiah as to the *conditions* on which the relation of Jahaveh to Israel rests, and in regard to the relation of the Jahaveh religion to the outside world; but within the range of written prophecy we do not find the development of the idea of Jahaveh Himself. In regard to the conception that He controls the whole world, there is no difference in the teaching of Amos and Jeremiah. I know that Wellhausen and Stade would reject all passages in Amos[1] which express such high views of Jahaveh's character, on the ground that they disturb the connection. Robertson Smith,[2] though he does not reject them, says mildly

[1] Such passages as Amos iv. 13, v. 8 ff., ix. 1-7. See chap. vi. p. 146.

[2] Prophets of Israel, p. 398 f.

that they are not necessary for the understanding of the context; and he refers, apparently with favour, to Wellhausen's explanation of their presence in the text—that they are *lyrical intermezzi*, like those that are found so frequently in the Deutero-Isaiah. *Lyrical intermezzi* forsooth! Any one with the least sympathy with the writers will recognise in them the outpourings of hearts that were full of the noblest conceptions of the God whom they celebrate, and will perceive that they come in most fitly to emphasise the context.

On this point Kuenen has to defend himself, and he explains at length[1] his position as compared with that of Baudissin and contrasted with that of H. Schultz. His explanation amounts to this, that, if the prophets of the eighth century use expressions concerning Jahaveh's supremacy over the heathen world as well as Israel, and concerning the gods of the heathen, which practically amount to a denial of the existence of the latter, this shows that they belong to a period of transition or of *nascent monotheism*. Traces of this are still to be found distinctly in Deuteronomy itself.[2] This nascent monotheism in the prophets of the eighth century Kuenen describes as "a repeated overstepping of the line between monolatry and the recognition of one only God." He says: "I recognise monotheism *de facto* in these strong expressions of the prophets, and only deny that they had acquired it as a permanent possession. Now and then they rise to the recognition of the sole existence of Jahaveh, and the denial of "the other gods"; "but generally they do not get beyond the monolatry in which they, or at any rate the earlier ones among them, had been brought up." He maintains, however, in opposi-

[1] National Religions, note vii. p. 317 ff.

[2] Theol. Review, 1874, pp. 347-351.

tion to Schultz, that "the still older monotheism of the period before the prophets has no existence."

Now, if we examine this so-called nascent monotheism, which is admitted to be *de facto* monotheism, we find it full-grown at its birth. Amos, the earliest writing prophet, utters it in clear tones, as a familiar and admitted truth, in saying that Jahaveh had brought the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir, as he had brought Israel from Egypt, and in ever representing righteousness as the basis of the divine character. A being whose character is ethical, and whose rule unerringly controls the destinies of all nations alike (Amos ix. 7), is infinitely more than a national god, such as heathen nations conceived their deities; and in no case does Amos give any countenance to the so-called monolatry, as if the monotheism he taught was held loosely in his hands. But what are we to think of Kuenen's position that this *nascent* monotheism is also still to be found a century *after* Amos in the book of Deuteronomy? It is there *de facto* in Amos; still a century later it is only nascent; whereas in Elijah, a century before Amos, it has no existence, although in another connection both are declared to be equally organs of the Jahaveh religion. And we are to accept all this on the "I recognise" and "I maintain" of Dr Kuenen. In regard to the ethical character of Jahaveh, Amos and Hosea were just as bold and firm in chiding the sins of their contemporaries as Isaiah, who on this theory is supposed to have attained a conception of holiness which was only nascent in these earlier prophets; and the prophets that follow Isaiah are not more emphatic in the same strain, and yet they do not, like Isaiah, call Jahaveh the Holy One of Israel. In fact, this explanation of the rise of pure monothe-

ism is artificial in the extreme, and the "ethic monotheism" is merely a pretentious phrase. The same truth that Amos proclaimed finds expression in the words put in the mouth of Abraham by the Jehovistic narrator, "Shall not the Judge of all the world do right?" (Gen. xviii. 25); it was *de facto* held by Elijah and the seven thousand who like him would not bow the knee to Baal; it was held also by Samuel when he set up the stone Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto Jahaveh hath helped us:[1] and these men could not have asserted it, one after the other, so emphatically as they did, in times of deepest national depression, unless it had been deeply impressed on the hearts of the best of the nation from the early times at which the Biblical writers assume it.

4. Lastly, let us come back to Kuenen's emphasised assertion that the prophets agreed with the people in the tenacity with which they clung to the belief that Jahaveh and Israel were inseparable. The point is not disputed; but surely such a conviction must have been based upon something definite and positive, and it is most reasonable to assume that that something was believed to be *inherent in the nature of Jahaveh Himself.* If the nation believed that He would never give them up, however far they fell from Him; if the prophets believed that He would never give them up, and even would have a special favour for them when He became the God of all the families of mankind,—there must have been in the minds of all a belief of some quality strong enough to bind Jahaveh in this inseparable manner to His own people. Neither 'might,' nor holiness in its terrifying aspect, will explain this. Now such a quality or character we do find ascribed to Him by the earliest prophets, although it is a quality to which I think Kuenen makes

[1] König, Hauptprobleme, p. 44 f.

no reference. It is an attribute, without taking account of which we can neither understand the Old nor the New Testament. I call it, without hesitation, the quality of *grace*. In various ways the belief in it comes out; by various names the shades of its signification are expressed; but this variety only shows how *central*, to use Kuenen's own word, this attribute was in the conception. And I am not to reason from abstract principles here, or from the whole tenor of Biblical teaching. I take as witness one of the earliest of the writing prophets, who lived at the very time Kuenen's supposed development should have been taking place, and it is marvellous to me that Kuenen and other writers could have passed by a witness whose testimony is so precise. The whole of Hosea's book turns upon that idea,—God had *loved* Israel in the time of the nation's youth; and the touching story (or figure) of the wayward wife, going her own evil course, yet not rejected, —just because her husband had loved her at first,—and finally brought back, and by the power of love taught to love her husband,—all this is *applied* for us by the prophet himself to the history of Israel.[1] Here is another attribute than either might or holiness—and it is here at the very dawn of written prophecy, and placed by the prophet at the dawn of the national history—an attribute which surely raises the character of Jahaveh to a higher level, and casts light upon the apparent contradictions which Kuenen has exhibited. Jahaveh was, above all things, "faithful." He had done great things for Israel (Amos ii. 9-11) in the past out of mere grace, not because they had deserved it. The prophet Amos also, though he dwells more on the righteousness of Jahaveh, does not leave out of account the divine love and mercy.

[1] This is the substance, under any interpretation, of chapters i. to iii. See also chapter xi. 8 ff., "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?"

These attributes are implied in the great things that had been done for the nation in the past, and emphatically taught in the 7th chapter in the repeated visions of the prophet, in which the Lord "repents" of the evil about to be inflicted on His people: "It shall not be, saith Jahaveh." We get thus, instead of mere reasonings as to how conceptions arise, positive historical facts as the means of producing the idea which was held so tenaciously to the last. If the people perverted this doctrine, and sinned that grace might abound; if they presumed that, because Jahaveh could not deny Himself, therefore they might sin and repent,—this is no more than thousands have done in the times of the Gospel. But their tenacity to the belief that *He would* not forsake them can hardly be explained without such a belief underlying it. Even their redoubled zeal in the matter of vows and offerings, taken in connection with this belief in Jahaveh's faithfulness, is not without its significance,—not as showing that they believed these would turn the faithful One from His purpose, but as showing that they recognised them as the outward expression of *their* faithfulness, or promise of faithfulness, on their part. At all events, this unconquerable conviction, which the prophets held in a purer, and the people in a more corrupted form, guarantees the conclusion that both alike recognised in the character of Jahaveh an attribute which had a more personal relation to them than either the attribute of might or that of holiness, an attribute which Hosea simply calls *love;* which will explain, on the one side, His forgiveness of offences, and on the other His unalterable care and regard. And therefore we are entitled to conclude that this *fundamental* conception of Jahaveh underlying the views of people and prophets together, was substantially that embodied in the declaration of His

character, which is by the Biblical writers placed as far back as the time of Moses (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7, R.V.): "Jahaveh, Jahaveh, a God full of compassion and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation." It seems to me that if we place at the outset such a conception of Jahaveh, which is two-sided, and capable of expansion in two different lines, we can account for the development of the popular idea equally with that of the prophets from one common source; that we can give some explanation of the clearness with which the very earliest of the writing prophets represent the character of the national God, and also the persistency with which the people held to their view to the last. We obtain, in a word, development from a definite starting-point, whereas on Kuenen's view we neither find a reasonable meeting-point for the two divergent tendencies, nor can follow the steps in the development of either the one or the other.

"The principles which we see operating from the earliest times," says Professor A. B. Davidson, "are the principles wielded by the prophets. They are few but comprehensive. They form the essence of the moral law —consisting of two principles and a fact,—namely, that Jehovah was Israel's God alone; and that His being was ethical, demanding a moral life among those who served Him as His people: and these two principles elevated into a high emotional unity in the consciousness of redemption just experienced."[1]

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. v. p. 43.

CHAPTER XIII.

AUTHORITATIVE INSTITUTIONS—THEIR EARLY DATE

Connection of this with the preceding—Reasons for postponing consideration of forms, (1) *because practice is not a sure index of profession, and* (2) *because external forms, even when authorised, are not sufficient index of the truth of which they are signs—Mode of procedure as before—Three things to be distinguished, Law, Codification of Law, Writing of Law-books, on all of which the Biblical theory allows a latitude of view—Points at which the Biblical and the modern view are at variance—The conclusions of the modern theory,* (1) *Law not of Mosaic origin,* (2) *Codes so inconsistent that they must be of different dates—Position similar to that before assumed—Presumption that Moses gave definite laws—The Covenant, how signalised — Proofs from prophetical writers; from Psalms; from admitted historical books—Conclusion that a Norm or Law, outside of prophets and superior to them, was acknowledged—What was it?*

Up to this point the object of our inquiry has been to determine, as far as possible, what the religion of Israel was, in its essential and internal elements, at the earliest period to which we have access. We have examined the testimony given by the earliest admitted written sources to the nature of the religion at the date to which they belong, and have endeavoured to estimate the value of this class of witnesses for the determination of the religion of an antecedent and early time. Without relying on disputed books, we have found that

those which are admitted confirm in many ways the statements of those which are not primarily taken into account. The earliest writing prophets, though not appealing to the authority of books, appeal to admitted and undeniable facts which are asserted in these books; and our conclusion has been, that whereas the modern theory is obliged to overstrain those admitted facts of history and experience which have a show of being in its favour, and to underrate those which seem to oppose it, the Biblical theory is confirmed in the main, and that the religion of Israel had, at a much earlier stage than the modern critical writers admit, the purer and more ethical character which they would relegate to a later time.

We come now to consider whether in outward form also and positive institutions the religion of Israel had not, before the time of the earliest writing prophets, or before the time at which modern critical writers place such an organisation, a more defined shape and authoritative arrangement than the modern historians allow. The two things are closely connected. Religious belief and practice always act and react upon one another. According to the Biblical view, as there was an early revelation of spiritual truth, so there was an early institution of law and religious observance. On the modern view also the two things are intimately related. Wellhausen says,[1] "All writers of the Chaldæan period associate monotheism in the closest way with unity of worship;" and it is a fundamental element of his theory that the process of centralisation and spiritualisation which marks the development of the law and worship went on under prophetic influence and *pari passu* with the development of prophetic thought and teaching.[2]

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 27. [2] Ibid.; cf. p. 26 with 47, 81, 103.

It might seem at first sight that it would have been more proper to begin with outward observances, which are so obvious and give so tangible a representation of a people's religious belief; and then to reason from them to the essential character of the religion. There are, however, these two considerations to be taken into account. (1) In the first place, outward observance is not always, nor indeed generally, a faithful indication of religious profession; and when we are in search, as we are in this case, of a religion which claims to have been positively given with definite fundamental principles as well as formal institutions, it would be unfair to rest either upon the moral practice or the religious usages of a people making profession of such a religion. Forms may be perverted, obscured, or corrupted, and the life of the people is pretty certain to fall short of their faith. We might, for example, from the mere observance of facts and phenomena gather what was the "state of religion," as we use the phrase, in any given age of the Christian Church, but we would not be safe, from the mere contemplation of any age, in drawing a conclusion as to the essential character of Christianity. To argue from custom or observance in religion to the requirements and essence of religion would, in the case before us, be begging the question, which is virtually as to whether or not there was an ideal or positive religion to start with. By examining, as we have done, first of all the writings of the prophets, we gain some guiding light on this the fundamental point. And (2) in the second place, outward rites and ceremonies, in a special manner, do not furnish a sufficient indication of the truth of which they are symbols or concomitants. In such rites there has often been a carrying over and adaptation of old customary

observances, which are in this transference invested with a new meaning. Many of the observances of Christendom are of this description; even the sacraments of the New Testament rest, as symbolic ordinances, upon earlier usages, although in the Gospel they are invested with new meaning. So also it is well known that some of the observances that are now characteristic of Islam were adopted and adapted from pre-existing Arabian usages. In any of these cases, to argue from the forms, without knowing what they were meant to signify, would be manifestly and grossly unfair. It would be similar to the false reasoning, which we have had occasion to notice already, from the primary or etymological signification of a word, without taking note of the sense in which, at a given time and in a particular context, it is employed. And it is necessary now to enter this *caveat*, because, as we shall have occasion to notice, this mode of reasoning is not a little relied on in the treatment of this subject. Certain observances of the Israelite religion, which are represented by the Biblical writers as commemorative or symbolical of national religious facts, have the outward forms of old observances or popular customs, and several of them are connected with the cycle of the natural year; and the conclusion is drawn, that down to a very recent period the sacred festivals signified nothing more than the bare outward form expressed. Hence the necessity of determining, first of all, as we have endeavoured to do, whether in religious conceptions and beliefs Israel had not at a much earlier period passed beyond the elements of a mere naturalistic faith. Hence also the necessity of caution in reasoning from the mere outward concomitants and expressions of religion to the essence of the thing signified.

No doubt a certain prepossession, on the one side or the other, arising out of the preceding inquiry, attends us as we enter on this part of the subject. If we admit the conclusion that the religion of Israel was gradually evolved or developed from an animistic stage, we shall scarcely expect to find in the pre-prophetic period institutions of a high moral significance; but if, on the contrary, we are satisfied that the religion was in its earlier and fundamental stage of a more ethical and exalted character, it will not surprise us to find, in the period referred to, a set of religious institutions in keeping with and expressing the higher class of conceptions. We shall, however, endeavour to consider this part of the subject independently of any conclusions already reached; and in doing so, to follow the same method of procedure as before. From the known and admitted we shall seek to make our way to the unknown or disputed; endeavouring from clear indications of the records which are unquestioned to make out the state of religious ordinances of their time, and the testimony which they may give to a greater antiquity. And here again what is primarily to be determined is, not the date of certain books in which the formal statement and prescription of outward observances are contained, but the existence of the institutions, or the knowledge of the prescriptions at the time and on the part of the writers whose dates are known. If we shall find that the witnesses who are available testify to the existence of laws and ordinances such as are found in the documents whose date is unknown, there is a strong presumption that these ordinances are the things we are in search of; and even if the documents in which they are embodied should be of late composition, they will to us still retain substantially their historical value.

In the inquiry now before us there are three things which are easily distinguishable, and which ought to be kept distinct in our minds. These are, (*a*) the origin of laws and observances, (*b*) the codification of laws, or the formal ratification of observances, and (*c*) the composition of the books in which we find the laws finally embodied or the ordinances described. Laws and institutions may grow out of custom, or they may be matter of formal enactment; but in either case they may exist for a longer or shorter time without being embodied in written prescriptions. Again, the writing down of such prescriptions may be a gradual process, and result in the formation of more than one code; but even after laws are codified and institutions enacted, all experience proves that they may undergo modification. Finally, the writing of a book or books, in which codes or collections of laws and prescriptions of observances are strung upon a historical thread may quite conceivably be a work later than the formation of separate codes, and much later than the origination of the laws or ordinances.

A full investigation into all these subjects would take us very far afield; but we are kept within limitations by the nature of our present inquiry, and also by the circumstances of the case. We are not called upon, for example, to go into the abstract question of the origin of law and institutions, any more than in the former part of our inquiry we had to investigate the origin of religion. The Biblical writers maintain that from a certain historical period onwards—viz., from the time of Moses—Israel had a certain body of positive institutions (just as they assert that from Abraham's time they had a pure faith); and that these institutions are embodied in certain law-books which are preserved to us. Our inquiry is therefore

limited to a certain time, and concentrated upon certain subjects. It is also important to observe that, on all the three points just indicated, in so far as they are elements of the inquiry into the history of the religion of Israel, various views may be held, and that the Biblical theory, within certain limitations, leaves room for great latitude of view on details. (*a*) Religious observances, such as sacrifice, are spoken of as matters of course, and existing before there was formal legislation in regard to them. Even the so-called Grundschrift or Priestly Code does not exclude sacrifices from the patriarchal age, nor represent them as originating in the time of Moses. Nor is there anything either in history or in the nature of the case to make it improbable that usage at a certain point was stamped with the authority of law. (*b*) Further, if we take the statements of the law-books themselves, we are led to the conclusion that the laws therein contained were written down at different times. Moses is said to have written this and that, and in regard to many more, it is not said who wrote them at all. In regard to the collections of laws in particular—while it is said that Moses wrote the laws of the book of the Covenant and the Deuteronomic Code—it is not said that he wrote the Levitical laws, nor are we told who wrote them. (*c*) And finally, the books of the Pentateuch, as composite productions, containing both law and history, are anonymous compositions, and may have assumed their present form after the laws had existed for a time as a separate code or codes. It is greatly to be lamented that so much has been made of the mere question of the authorship of these books containing the laws. Although other books, which are also anonymous, are accepted as materials for history, although the books of the Pentateuch, with supreme in-

difference, say nothing about their authorship, it has been tacitly assumed that their whole value stands or falls with their Mosaic or non-Mosaic authorship. A broad distinction is evident between the questions, By whose instrumentality or authority was law given? and, By whose hands were books written which contain the law? The essential question is not as to the early or late date of the books of the Pentateuch, but as to the relation in which the legislation of the Pentateuch stands to the whole development of the history.

On this deeper question of the origin and religious meaning of the laws and institutions the two theories are as much opposed as we have seen them elsewhere. For just as, in the matter of religious conception and belief, the earlier phase is toned down by the modern historians to a naturalistic level, so in the matter of law the element of early positive enactment is minimised to the lowest possible degree. Custom and usage are made to account for the origin of a great part of the laws; for ages the nation is supposed to have been without authoritative law; and the actual amount of influence exerted by Moses is so explained away as to be almost inappreciable. On the other hand, though the Hebrew writers do not say anything as to who wrote the law-books, they assert positively that the law laid down in these books is Mosaic. Moreover, the theories being opposed as to the character of the Mosaic religion, their interpretation of the institutions will vary. To a deity who might be worshipped anywhere, who was circumscribed in the place of his abode, and who was merely a storm or sun or fire god, a kind of service might be appropriate that would be without proper significance in the worship of a deity who was in his central attributes

holy, and in his nature spiritual. The Mosaic or pre-prophetic religion will determine the significance (if not the outward form) of the Mosaic or pre-prophetic institutions.

It is clear that to determine the point in dispute, we must appeal, if possible, to some independent testimony outside the laws themselves or the books in which they are contained; and that the value we shall attach to these legislative books will depend on the conclusions to be drawn from such independent sources. The only use that can be made of the laws themselves in the controversy, is to compare them with one another and with the prophetical and historical literature whose authority is admitted. Such a comparison has in fact been the task of criticism. As a result, the modern historians claim to have proved, (1) that the history of the time succeeding Moses, and down to a comparatively late period, does not show that the laws claiming to be Mosaic were in force, but shows, on the contrary, that the practice of the best men of the nation was inconsistent with them; from which the inference is drawn, that these laws were not up to that time in existence; and (2) that the laws themselves which are called Mosaic, when examined and compared, are so inconsistent with one another that they cannot all have been in force at the same time; particularly there are three codes discernible, which indicate three distinct modes of observance, and must have belonged to three historical periods, widely separated, which periods can be determined by comparing the requirements of the respective codes with the practice prevailing at different times in the history. In short, gradual growth by development is to be made to explain the origin of institutions, just as it explained the origin of religious conceptions; and this

growth is to be exhibited within the field in which we have the means of testing conclusions by historical documents. Accordingly, just as we had to inquire into the elements of the Mosaic religion of Jahaveh, and trace the connection of the pre-prophetic with the prophetic religion, so here we have to inquire into the origin of the laws, and the consistency of the codes which are contained in the Pentateuch, in order to determine whether, or to what extent, they may be held to be, or proved not to be, Mosaic. In the present chapter we confine ourselves to the inquiry whether there is any presumptive or any positive proof that Moses gave to Israel such a positive legislation as the law-books exhibit.

It occurs at once as a striking thing that the uniform tradition is, that Moses gave laws and ordinances to Israel. And that it is not a blind ascription of everything to some great ancestor, may be gathered from the fact that there are ordinances and customs which are not traced to him. The Sabbath is made as old as the creation; circumcision is a mark of the covenant with Abraham; sacrifices are pre-Mosaic; and the abstaining from the sinew that shrank is traced to the time of Jacob. The body of laws, however, that formed the constitution of Israel as a people, is invariably referred to Moses. There must be some historical basis for the mere fact that all the three successive codes, as they are called, dating, as is alleged, from periods separated from one another by centuries,[1] are ascribed to Moses; whereas another alleged code, found in the book of Ezekiel, never obtained authoritative recognition. The persistence with which it is represented that law, moral and ceremonial, came from Moses, and the accept-

[1] The separate codes will be more particularly described in the next chapter.

ance of the laws by the whole people as of Mosaic origin, proves at least that it was a deeply seated belief in the nation that the great leader had given some formal legal constitution to his people. It seems to me that it is trifling with a great subject to say, in the same breath, that Moses could scarcely have been even the author of the whole of the Decalogue, and also that he "was regarded as the great lawgiver, and all laws which God was considered to have sanctioned were placed under his name, that being the regular and only method of conferring authority upon new enactments."[1] The testimony of a nation is not to be so lightly set aside: it is the work of criticism to explain and account for tradition, not to give it the lie. And all the circumstances of the time make it abundantly probable that the tradition rests upon some good foundation.

Moses and his people came out of a country that had been long civilised, and in which ritual and legislation were particularly attended to. They came into a land which, as we now know, possessed civilisation and education before they appeared in it, and they not only secured a footing, but gained supremacy and maintained it, believing all the time that they were divinely guided. Now, if the tribes whom Moses led had any unity at all, if they did not wander aimlessly into Canaan, if they had the least feeling of the necessity of adhering closely together in the face of the inhabitants whom they dispossessed,[2] such a unity and cohesion would be produced or fostered by the possession of definite laws or customs, marking them off from their neighbours, and binding them together into one. Mere common belief, especially of the elementary kind which modern writers allow to them, would not have sufficed to separate them from the Canaanite inhabi-

[1] Allan Menzies, National Religion, p. 17 f. [2] See Note XXIV.

tants in such a way as to ensure their ultimate supremacy; a common tradition must be put into practical shape and active operation by common observances. Even if the work of Moses was merely the consolidation of common observances prevailing prior to the Mosaic age, these must have been stamped with special authority, supplemented by special institutions, and raised to the dignity of definite ordinance, if there is any truth at all in the unanimous ascription of law to Moses. Moreover, if ever there was a crisis in the history of Israel at which the setting up of formal institutions, the laying down of formal rules for national guidance, was naturally to be expected, it was at this stage. It is strange indeed that critical historians of Israel should postulate the putting forth of "legislative programmes" at various later points in Israel's history, and should be so unwilling to admit the same for the time of Moses. For just as individuals in their early life, when moved by a high purpose, sketch out for themselves careers and lay down rules of conduct and principles of action, it was surely the most natural thing in the world for the great leader of Israel to trace out a programme of conduct, and hedge it round with precautionary measures, at a time when his nation was to pass from a nomadic to a more settled life, and when they were liable to be led away by various temptations from the simplicity of their primitive faith. Any one who can recall his plans and resolutions formed in early life, or who has perchance preserved juvenile journals or memoranda, will admit that in such circumstances there is a natural tendency to run into minute details, which the exigencies of actual life afterwards modify or even render impracticable. The First Book of Discipline, drawn up by Knox and his associates at the Reformation in Scotland, is a striking historical

instance of such a programme.[1] So that, if in the post-Mosaic history of Israel we find little mention of many of the enactments ascribed to Moses and the early Mosaic time, this need not surprise us when we bear in mind the totally new environments of life of the people, and the common frailties of human nature. How much more may be implied in the undoubted fact that the succeeding books take little account of the detailed legislation of the Pentateuch, we need not here consider. Enough has been said to prove in a general way that a certain amount of legislation must be ascribed to Moses. If his name stands for any fact at all in the history of Israel, if in any conceivable way he made an abiding impression upon his people, it was by producing, or by cementing an already existing intimate relation between their consciousness and the national God. This relation the Biblical writers call a covenant.[2] Critical writers can hardly avoid using the expression, and are bound to admit the fact, by whatever name it may be called. They tell us that the compact amounted to this, "Israel was to be Jahaveh's people, and Jahaveh Israel's God." Is it conceivable that at a period such as that in which this compact is placed, at a time when the nation needed outward props and helps, a time when forms of worship and observance were the most natural and unavoidable, even a bare covenant like this should have been unaccompanied with any ceremonial to keep it alive in the national consciousness, and impress its significance upon their lives? Can we believe that Moses taught the people that the God whom they could not see was "just and righteous," that by being just and

[1] Story's Church of Scotland, Past and Present. See particularly vol. ii. p. 437, *foot*.

[2] See Note XXII., and compare above, p. 313.

righteous they could best please Him, that, in a word, "Moses set up the great principle that the true sphere of religion is common life,"[1] and yet that he left a people such as they were without any ordinances of worship, and without any laws for the guidance of their daily life? A people, too, who at that very time, and in the power of their faith, were asserting their individuality! A "peculiar" people, as such a covenant necessarily made them, must have distinctive outward marks; a "holy" nation, on the very lowest ideas of holiness, must be separated from what is unclean; a "holy" deity, still on the most elementary conception of the term, must be fenced off by some restrictions, must be reverenced by some sacred ceremonial. The very idea of a covenant, if it does not even imply sacrifice, is intimately associated with it (Ps. l. 5). Whether the ceremonies were adaptations of old customs or new institutions, if such a definite thing as a covenant stands at the threshold of the national history, then to deny to Moses the organisation of Israel on the basis of definite observances, not only of a moral but also of a ceremonial character, is altogether an excess of arbitrariness, and leaves the unvarying tradition of later time without any adequate explanation or support.

But more precise and direct proof may be drawn from the prophetical and other accepted literature of the time to which we are confining ourselves. We may not have, indeed, unequivocal "references" to the books of the Law, or to the codes in which certain laws are contained; nor do we find full accounts of the observances of the minute ceremonial and liturgical prescriptions of the Pentateuch. It has been too much the habit of apologetic writers to look for positive citations of the books of the Pentateuch,

[1] Allan Menzies, National Religion, p. 24.

or to argue from the use of certain expressions in prophetical or historical books that the legislative books in which such or similar expressions also occur were then in existence and were thus consciously referred to.[1] But critical writers have gone to the other extreme in arguing that where a law or ordinance is not mentioned by historical or prophetical authors, it was not known to them, and therefore had no existence in their day. We shall have to test the value of this argument in the sequel; in the meantime we have to look at the testimony borne by the prophetical and other books on this subject.

From the whole tone of the prophetical literature we may argue in a general way that there was in the times of the earliest writing prophets a universal recognition of a well-known *norm* or rule of conduct as possessed by the nation, though sadly dishonoured so far as concerns its observance. The attitude of reproof taken up by the prophets, and the absence of gainsaying on the part of the people whom they addressed, prove the recognition of some authoritative norm lying at the threshold of the nation's history, according to the principles laid down by St Paul (Rom. iii. 20), that through the law is the knowledge of sin, and (v. 13) that sin is not imputed where there is no law.[2] An argument of this kind is not indeed sufficient to establish the Mosaic origin of all the legislation of the Pentateuch; it may not even necessarily lead to the conclusion that formal codes were in existence at all; but it warrants the conclusion, not merely that guidance was given to the people, from time to time as occasion required, by prophetic or priestly men, but

[1] See before, chapter v. p. 108.

[2] So De Wette reasoned in a Review of Vatke in Theol. Stud. u. Krit. for 1837, p. 1003.

that some standard of obedience and religious observance was acknowledged as set up for permanent appeal and authority.

But we can go much further than this. The manner in which the earliest prophets refer to such an authority —if language is to retain its ordinary meaning at all— implies principles of action embodied in concrete recognised laws. When Amos threatens Judah, "because they have rejected the law of the Lord, and have not kept His statutes" (Amos ii. 4), whether he is thinking of books or not, he is certainly thinking of certain standing principles objectively regarded as regulative of moral and religious life. Law or Torah may conceivably have been at first, as the critics assert, no more than instruction conveyed from time to time by prophet or priest; and this matter we shall consider in the next chapter. But the conjunction of the word "statutes" leaves no room for doubt that the prophet referred to an objective and concrete norm. Torah *may* be teaching, but statutes are determinate things, not given once and then forgotten, but set up as a standing rule. Moreover, the sins for which Israel in the sequel of the same chapter is reproved, though all of a moral kind, are just such sins as are condemned in the moral parts of the Pentateuchal codes. This prophet has no doubt, and his hearers dare not deny, that the oppression of the poor, the retaining of pledges,[1] the perversion of justice, and the like, are violations of rules which every one admitted to be binding upon the nation. It is particularly to be noticed that the sins for which Israel and Judah are threatened are more precise and special than those breaches of the most elementary laws of humanity against which the prophetic reproofs

[1] Amos ii. 8. Comp. Exod. xxii. 26.

of other nations, Damascus, Philistia, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab, are directed; and that it is precisely in Judah, where "law" and "statutes" would be best known and most universally acknowledged, that their violation is singled out for reprobation.[1]

The case is similar with the prophet Hosea. "They have wandered from me," he says (vii. 13): "they have transgressed my covenant and trespassed against my law" (viii. 1). The sins for which he reproves the men of Israel of his time are just such sins as the moral laws of the Mosaic legislation condemn;[2] and we have in one passage a clear indication that written law, and that of considerable compass, was known and acknowledged in his days. The passage (Hosea viii. 12), much as it has been commented upon, and sought to be explained away in this connection, cannot be taken to give any other sense that is at all reasonable. Whether we read, with the Revised Version, "though I write for him my law in ten thousand precepts," or, with the margin, "I wrote for him the ten thousand things of my law"—whether, that is to say, we take the words as positive or hypothetical, as referring to the past, or to the present or future—the prophet indicates a thing that his hearers would regard as either done, or natural to be done, and that thing is the writing of law in a copious manner, and the writing done directly by divine authority.

The manner in which Wellhausen gets rid of this passage is exceedingly characteristic. He says:[3]—

[1] I do not press the allusions in Amos iv. 4, 5, although an argument might be drawn for the recognition of ritual laws, which are there represented as exaggerated or perverted.—See Bredenkamp, Gesetz u. Propheten, p. 82.

[2] See the whole of Hosea iv.

[3] Hist. of Israel, p. 57.

"In another passage (viz., this) we read, 'Ephraim has built for himself many altars, to sin; the altars are there for him, to sin. How many soever my instructions (*torothâi*) may be, they are counted those of a stranger.' This text has had the unmerited misfortune of having been forced to do service as a proof that Hosea knew of copious writings similar in contents to our Pentateuch. All that can be drawn from the contrast, 'instead of following my instructions they offer sacrifice' (for that is the meaning of the passage), is that the prophet had never once dreamed of the possibility of cultus being made the subject of Jehovah's directions."

Here, to begin with, Wellhausen omits in his citation the significant word "write," a proceeding which, looking to the question involved, is, at the least, not ingenuous; for the word so rendered cannot be toned down to the general sense of "prescribe." And then, if all that the passage means is what he says, "instead of following my instructions they offer sacrifice," is it not a very remarkable way of saying it, and does not the mention of "writing," in this subsidiary fashion, prove all the more strongly that written instructions (*torothâi*, and where are such to be found if not in some code or other?) were familiar and well known? Not in this fashion does Wellhausen pass by significant words in a verse when these can be turned to the support of his theory. The fact that "writing" occurs to the prophet where he does not base his main argument upon it, is the strong point; and thus, occurring in the connection in which it stands, this single passage suffices to establish the existence of written law of considerable compass at the time of Hosea. And as if to assure us that ritual ordinance was as well known as moral precept, and as if to anticipate Wellhausen's remark that "the prophet never once dreamed of the possibility of cultus being made the subject of Jehovah's direction," the prophet goes on in the following

verse to say, "As for the sacrifices of *mine* offerings, they sacrifice flesh and eat it." The occurrence of the single suffixal *mine* here, as in Isaiah i. 12, "to tread *my* courts," in a passage in which that prophet is by modern critics maintained to deny the divine authority of all sacrificial service, are much more convincing proofs to the contrary than formal statements would have been. Both these prophets rebuke the performance of sacrifice as it went on in their day, and we need not wonder at the sharpness of the rebukes. But at the same time, both of them, in claiming Temple and offerings as belonging rightly to Jahaveh, tacitly confirm the supposition, which is most natural in itself, that Israel up to their time had a law of worship which was undisputed, and that the Temple, set apart to the outward service of the national God, was provided with an authoritative order and ritual.[1]

These indications in the earliest writing prophets are entirely against the supposition that it was through the influence of the prophets that the codes of law came into existence, as they are against the idea that law was regarded by them as a thing still in flux, and given out from time to time by either prophet or priest as occasion demanded. Any references that are found to laws or ordinances in the prophetical writings are always of the nature of references to things existing and well known in their times. If, in a few passages, the law or laws are spoken of as having been given by prophetic mediation, it will be found that the references (as in Ezra ix. 10, 11) will apply to Moses, who is regarded as a prophet and the leader of the prophets.[2] In any case, the law or norm is regarded as a thing antecedent to the prophets, and having a divine sanction and authority apart from themselves.

[1] See Note XXV.

[2] Deut. xviii. 15; Hosea xii. 13.

Passing beyond the prophetical books—and we have only glanced at the earliest of these—we might find the same conclusion confirmed in a very striking way by an examination of the Psalms, in which God's law, statutes, and commandments are referred to in such a manner as to suggest positive, well-understood things as the guides of religious conduct, the comfort of a religious life. Here, however, the dates and authorship of the compositions are so much disputed, that, with the limitations we have imposed on our inquiry, we must content ourselves with a brief reference. When all has been done that modern criticism can do to relegate the bulk of the Psalms to a late period, and make the Psalter the book of praise of the post-exilian synagogue, there still remain, even in the accepted pre-exilian Psalms, certain expressions which cannot be explained away. Even so thorough-going a critic as Hitzig accepted the latter part of Psalm xix., with its praise of the law, as Davidic, although Cheyne[1] has recently pronounced it to be late. But if any part of the Psalter is to be ascribed to David at all, it is the 18th Psalm; and, not to speak of other references it contains to God's "ways" and His "word," it is not easy to see what precise meaning can be attached to v. 22, "For all His judgments were before me, and I did not put away His statutes from me," if there was no body of positive religious principles of action existent in his day. The "uncritical" English reader should, however, be reminded here that it is not on linguistic considerations, but on the grounds of a higher criticism—*i.e.*, of a theory of the religious development—that so many of the Psalms are assigned to a late date.

[1] The Book of Psalms; or, The Praises of Israel. A new translation with commentary (1888).

Let us next consider what conclusion is to be drawn from the undisputed portions of the books of Judges and Samuel. Though they do not give us much information as to legal observances, and are usually claimed as proving that the Deuteronomic and Levitical codes were unknown at the periods to which they refer, there are certain indications in them pointing unmistakably to the conclusion that there was a recognised order of some kind in those days. It is self-evident that the Tabernacle at Shiloh could not have existed, nor have formed the centre of worship, without some recognised ritual. Even should it be proved that the practices of Eli's sons mentioned in the book of Samuel were inconsistent with the requirements of the Levitical code, this is no more than might have been expected from such men. The wonder would be if the practices of men such as they are depicted were in keeping with any conceivable authoritative rule at all. The point, however, now insisted on is, that the Shiloh worship must have been invested with authority; and therefore that the idea of authoritative law for ceremonial was familiar by that time. And so the sacrifices offered by Samuel, even should it be proved that his manner of performing them contradicts the requirements of the codes, imply a recognised and authoritative law or rule of sacrifice. They are offered to Jahaveh and in connection with the national recognition of Him, and must therefore have been regarded as sanctioned and accepted by Him. In other words, at that time there was some received legislation. So in the period of the Judges there are indications that the people were acquainted with some standard of authority, and accustomed to conceptions involving national obligations.

There is, for example, the incidental mention of the ark

in Judges xx. 27, 28. It is true this occurs in a portion of the book which is pronounced to be late. But even if we had not this mention at all, we come upon the ark again at the opening of the book of Samuel, where it is the centre of the worship for the time; and we should be bound to explain whence it came, and how it had acquired this dignity. The very brevity of the allusion however, in Judges, is proof that the writer looked upon the ark as a national institution; and if the statement has any historic value at all, it proves the possession by Israel of some outward bond of religious life. In other words, they were not at this time merely a number of isolated tribes, related in some loose way to one another, and owning one common tribal god; but they had, previous to this time, been accustomed to regard themselves as one people, and, as a mark of their unity, had some form of outward worship. We must therefore go back to the time preceding the Judges for some account of this feature of their religious life; and no Biblical writer gives the least hint of the existence of anything like it in the early patriarchal age. The reference to Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, who ministers at the ark, indicating a hereditary priesthood in the family of Aaron, of course does not suit the modern theory. It is simply called by Wellhausen [1] "a gloss which forms a very awkward interruption." Much more to his purpose is the statement (in xviii. 30) that Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, became a priest to the Danites, as a proof that there was no regular Aaronic priesthood —although it is added in the next verse that "Micah's graven image" was at Dan "all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh." At all events we have here, in

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 237.

these two incidental allusions, sufficient to carry us back to a period antecedent to the Judges for an explanation of the religious position of the people at that time. The ark of God, a priesthood, whether hereditary or not, a house of God at Shiloh—all these imply much more than they express. The priest must have a function, the house of God some ritual, an ark some history. These things could not have been borrowed from the Canaanites the moment the conquest was secured. Even such matters as the distinction of clean and unclean animals, the prohibition of certain foods, and the treatment of lepers, which may, and probably do, go back to pre-Mosaic times, imply regulation, ceremony, and, in many cases, the offering of sacrifices. All these, however, are just the things that would be taken under the sanction of the covenant, which was to set apart a holy people, and made matters of prescription by a legislative founder like Moses. For it is always to be remembered that by this time certainly the Israelite tribes were in possession of the Jahaveh religion. These outward arrangements, whatever their origin, were associated with their worship of Him as their only God; and as that religion, on any explanation of it, was the characteristic mark separating them from their neighbours, it is surely most extraordinary to suppose that the outward concomitants of the religion should present no difference from the worship of the peoples around them.

Again, it is maintained by Wellhausen and his school that the tribe of Levi was originally a secular tribe like the others, and associated with the kindred tribe of Simeon, whose fate it shared in being dispersed in Israel; and it is maintained that the Levitical guild was a growth of much later time, when priestly development had far advanced. Now the story of Micah in the book of Judges is

much relied on by the critics for the state of religion[1] at this early period. In that story (chap. xvii.) a young man of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, departs from Bethlehem-Judah to sojourn where he could find a place, and comes to Micah, who hires him to be his priest. It is added: "Then said Micah, Now know I that the Lord will do me good, seeing I have a Levite to my priest." And again, in the 19th chapter, which is allowed to contain archaic matter, we find a certain Levite sojourning on the farther side of the hill-country of Ephraim. Now it might be said, these are simply members of the extinct tribe of Levi. But it does seem remarkable that in both cases they should be seen sojourning—moving about, in fact—as the Levites, according to the legal requirement, might be expected to do. And more remarkable is the fact that they are specially called Levites—though why the tribal designation is kept up when the tribe is absorbed is not clear; and most remarkable of all that Micah, steeped to the lips in superstition, should believe that good was sure to come to him because he had a Levite for a priest. On the theory of the Old Testament writers, the fact, notwithstanding all the surrounding superstition, is easily explained. There was a tribe of Levi without territory, with a priestly or *quasi*-priestly function, the members of which were held in repute on that account. On the new theory, we meet with a feature of the life of that rude age that calls for an explanation, and fails to find it. To my mind such an incidental notice is a very strong corroboration of the history which declares that a tribe of Levi was set apart for sacred functions; and considering the age in which the events occurred, a more convincing proof of the accuracy

[1] See chapter ix. p. 231.

of the book than an elaborate attempt to show that all the requirements of the Levitical law were in force. The discovery of a fact like this, in the darkness and ignorance of those times, sends us back to a time antecedent to the Judges for the proper basis of the religious constitution of Israel.

The references we thus find in undoubtedly early compositions, though not perhaps numerous, yet just because they are incidental and indirect, establish a very strong presumption that the pre-prophetic religion was backed up by a well-recognised system of positive enactments, and account for the persistent ascription of code after code to Moses. There are other considerations, pointing in the same direction, which should not be left out of account. There is, *e.g.*, the remarkable fact that, during the whole of the regal period, we never hear of the kings making laws, while there is a constant reference to law, in some sense or other, as an authoritative thing in the nation. The solitary instance that is recorded (1 Sam. xxx. 25) only proves the rule. Again, there is the undisputed fact that a recognised priesthood existed in Israel from very early times. It is hardly conceivable that such an order should have existed without formal regulation and prescribed functions; and as the critical historians refer to priestly circles the very earliest collection of laws, contained in the book of the Covenant, and admit that the priests always appealed to the authority of Moses, the inference does not seem unwarranted that a priestly law, of some extent and of a definite description, formed part of the constitution given to Israel by the great lawgiver.

It is, it must be confessed, somewhat remarkable that so little is said of Moses by the earlier prophets, though some have overstated the matter, and have drawn from it

a conclusion which is quite unwarranted. Ghillany,[1] *e.g.*, mentions it as a circumstance hitherto unnoticed, that the name of Moses, except in the post-exilic Malachi (iv. 4) and Daniel (ix. 11, 13), does not occur in any of the prophets; or at least he had not discovered the name anywhere else in the prophets—not even in Ezekiel. Elsewhere[2] he says that Moses, so renowned among the Jews after the captivity, is only named five times altogether in the whole prophetical literature, and that of all the prophets who lived before B.C. 622, the year in which the so-called Mosaic law was found in the Temple, not one mentions Moses as a lawgiver or appeals to his authority. Only in one of the prophets before that period (Micah vi. 4) is there found an exception; and this passage is declared to be an interpolation. It is clear, however, that Hosea, though he does not name him, directly refers to Moses when he says that by a "prophet" the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt (xii. 13). Jeremiah also must have had Moses in mind when he said, "Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them" (Jer. vii. 25, &c.) Moreover, in Isa. lxiii. 11, Moses is expressly named. The inference, however, from such texts, is rather against than in favour of the modern theory.[3] So precarious is the argument from silence, that one is almost tempted to maintain the paradox that the things which are least mentioned were the most familiar. The historical fact stands undoubted, that, from first to last, legislation

[1] Die Menschenopfer der alten Hebräer, p. 27.

[2] Theologische Briefe von Richard von der Alm, vol. i. p. 179 ff.

[3] König, Hauptprobleme, p. 16; Delitzsch, Comm. on Genesis, Eng. trans., vol. i. p. 11 f.

was ascribed to Moses; and if the critics should succeed in making out from this silence that the earlier prophets knew little or nothing of Moses, then it is all the more difficult to explain how a person so unknown and undistinguished should have had invariably the immense work of legislation ascribed to him. Much rather should we say that the work of Moses was so familiar to the national mind that there was no need to mention him by name; a mere reference to Egypt or Sinai was to the popular mind more than a verbal mention. We know how in other Scriptures, which are not from the hands of prophets, the highest place is assigned to Moses as an organ of divine revelation (Exod. xxxiii. 11; Num. xii. 6-8; Deut. xxxiv. 10). Such passages are surer indications than express mention of his name, that Moses was in the estimation and recollection of the nation "the most exalted figure in all primitive history";[1] and account satisfactorily for the constant ascription to him of the legislation. Still we come back to what is better than verbal references, the underlying assumption in the earlier prophets and extra-legislative literature, that there was an objective and undisputed norm, to whose authority prophets, priests, and people alike acknowledged submission. The question, therefore, which now presses itself upon us for solution is, What was the law or norm which is thus referred to?

[1] Ranke, Universal History, translated by Prothero, p. 31.

CHAPTER XIV.

AUTHORITATIVE INSTITUTIONS—THEIR RELIGIOUS BASIS.

Brief summary of leading positions of the modern school—Examination of main points: (1) *Oral law before written law; references to law of priests and prophets; theory of law orally given from time to time down to reign of Josiah shown to be untenable:* (2) *Origin of feasts and worship according to the theory—Natural and agricultural basis, centralisation, fixity, historical reference—The theory criticised:* (*a*) *the mere joyousness of a nature feast made too much of; the basket of fruits;* (*b*) *exaggerated importance of idea of centralisation;* (*c*) *failure to show transition from agricultural to religious feasts, and to explain the historical reference—The Passover a glaring instance.*

In the preceding chapter we have seen reasons for ascribing to Moses a definite and authoritative system of law. If the references of the prophetical and other books have been rightly interpreted, we should expect to find somewhere a code or codes of laws regulating the life and worship of Jahaveh's people; and as we know of no other laws than those contained in the law-books, there is a primary presumption that these are the laws in question. If not, the question is, Where are the laws, or what has become of them? or, put otherwise, What are the laws which these books contain?

The account the modern theory gives of the matter is something to the following effect: Moses neither wrote

nor ordained an elaborate body of laws. Law (Torah) was at first and for a long time an oral system of instruction, which at definite and comparatively late periods was codified for special purposes. Nor are the religious rites and ceremonies that claim to have been given by Moses of Mosaic origin, but survivals of old customary observances, principally connected with the agricultural year, and transformed at a late time into ceremonies of a more national and religious nature. This view, it is claimed, is not only consistent with the statements of the prophets, but is the only one in harmony with the history. To the main points here stated we now turn our attention.

(1.) In the first place, we are told there was an oral law before there was a written law. The priests had as their function to teach the people; the prophets also were teachers; but the law or teaching communicated by both was an oral thing, given forth as occasion demanded, at the request of individuals who came to the priests for direction, or spontaneously by the prophets when they were moved to give their testimony. The priestly Torah was a more regular thing; the prophetic, sporadic and occasional; and there was this difference, that the priest rested upon tradition, whereas the prophet spoke by his own authority, or rather in the name of God directly. "The priests derived their Torah from Moses; they claimed only to preserve and guard what Moses had left (Deut. xxxiii. 4, 9 *seq.*) He counted as their ancestor (xxxiii. 8; Judges xviii. 30); his father-in-law is the priest of Midian at Mount Sinai, as Jehovah also is derived in a certain sense from the older deity of Sinai."[1] When priests and prophets are mentioned together, "the priests take precedence of the prophets. . . . For this reason,

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 396.

that they take their stand so entirely on the tradition and depend on it, their claim to have Moses for their father, the beginner and founder of their tradition, is in itself the better founded of the two."[1] "The prophets have notoriously no father (1 Sam. x. 12). . . . We have thus on the one side the tradition of a class, which suffices for the occasions of ordinary life; and on the other, the inspiration of awakened individuals, stirred up by occasions which are more than ordinary."[2] The priestly Torah was chiefly confined to law and morals, though the priests "also gave ritual instruction (*e.g.*, regarding cleanness and uncleanness)." In pre-exilian antiquity, however, "the priests' own praxis [at the altar] never constituted the contents of the Torah," which "always consisted of instructions to the laity."[3]

That the word Torah is applied to oral instruction, and means originally, like the corresponding words διδαχή and *doctrina*, simply teaching, need not be disputed. It seems to have the primary idea of *throwing out* the hand in the gesture of guidance or *direction*[4] (which would perhaps be a better rendering), and it is found in this general sense in Prov. i. 8, iii. 1, iv. 2: "The instruction of thy father, and the law of thy mother;" "my law." So

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 397.

[2] Ibid., p. 398.

[3] Ibid., p. 59, note.

[4] There seems, however, no reason to conclude that Torah, from a verb "to throw," originally referred to the casting down of some kind of dice, as, *e.g.*, Urim and Thummim, to determine a course of action, as Wellhausen (Hist. of Israel, p. 394) supposes. There is no instance of decision by the Urim and Thummim being called Torah; and Wellhausen himself strenuously maintains an oral Torah by the prophets, which could not have been of this description. Stade, of course, traces back the oracle and the use of the lot to fetishistic and animistic practices, and the priest to the soothsayer. The prophet who, at a later time, contended with the mechanical priestcraft, was also a survival of the primitive "seer."—Geschichte, vol. i. pp. 468-476.

that any advice, for the purpose of guidance (for that is always implied), is naturally denoted by it; and the guidance or instruction of priests or prophets, who were the religious guides or instructors of the people, is, as a matter of course, denoted by one common word, Torah. Examples of the use of the word to express *prophetic* teaching are found in Isaiah, who says: "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; attend to the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah" (i. 10), where he is clearly referring to his own teaching; and even if we suppose a reference to a written law, it could only be to the substance and not the letter of it that he directed attention. So when he says, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples" (viii. 16), though he is speaking of something objective, positive, and authoritative, it is most natural to see a reference to what he had just said or was about to say. Probably also a general sense should be given to the word in xxx. 9, "This is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord." Again we have mention of a specific *priestly* Torah in the Blessing of Moses, one of the oldest pieces of Hebrew literature, where it is said of the tribe of Levi, "They shall teach Jacob Thy judgments, and Israel Thy law: they shall put incense before Thee, and whole burnt-offerings upon Thine altar" (Deut. xxxiii. 10). Whatever else we may learn from the verse, the function of the Levite to teach is clearly stated, and this means a course of instruction or acts of instruction to the people. That a distinction was drawn between the teaching of the priests and that of the prophets, we may also conclude from such a passage as Micah iii. 11, "The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets divine for money." A similar distinc-

tion, showing the existence of a priestly law, is found in Jeremiah, "The law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet" (xviii. 18); in Lamentations (ii. 9), "Her king and her princes are among the nations where law is not; yea, her prophets find no vision from the Lord;" and in Ezekiel, "The law shall perish from the priest, and counsel from the ancients" (vii. 26); "her priests have violated my law, and profaned mine holy things," &c. (xxii. 26). In other passages, again, "law" seems to be used as synonymous with "the word of the Lord," generally to express the whole of the truth of revelation, as in Isaiah ii. 3, v. 24, xlii. 4; Micah iv. 2; and perhaps Amos ii. 4, and Hosea viii. 1.

While, however, these distinctions are noticeable, the inferences drawn from them are not at all warrantable. The general use of the word to denote divine revelation of truth as a whole implies a unity in that truth, and to this extent it is true that even the priestly Torah was mainly, or we should rather say, fundamentally, of a moral character; although we have seen in the last chapter good reason for concluding that the prophets knew of and recognised a ritual law as well. But the main point now in hand is the alleged long existence of oral apart from and antecedent to written Torah; and it may be maintained, even on the ground of the passages just cited, that the inference is too bold. Let us make the supposition demanded by Wellhausen, that the priests had the practice of giving oral decisions as occasion arose. Still, the question arises, Did the priests decide individual cases according to their individual judgment? and if not, what precisely were the guiding principles on which they acted? It is hardly conceivable that such in-

struction, if regularly given, up to a comparatively late time, should not have assumed, in practice, some concrete expression. The sentences uttered on various and recurring occasions must, at all events, have been regarded as self-consistent, and of concordant tenor, before they could be spoken of under this comprehensive term of Torah or instruction. Then we have to note particularly how it is admitted that the oral priestly Torah, which is thus assumed, always claims for itself, not only high antiquity, but Mosaic sanction. And, since even the priestly Torah is represented as a unity, we are led to inquire whether there was not some positive guide in the form of typical decisions which would account for so firm a tradition, and give some kind of uniformity to the oral sentences. If an oral teaching by the prophets did not prevent them from writing down their discourses, why should the priests, who had a teaching of a much more detailed and technical kind to convey, not have had a written Torah for their guidance? Wellhausen feels the force of this, for he says it might be supposed that, even if Deuteronomy and the Levitical Code are late, the Jehovistic legislation contained in the book of the Covenant (Exod. xx.-xxiii., xxxiv.) "might be regarded as the document which formed the starting-point of the religious history of Israel. And this position is in fact generally claimed for it."[1] It belongs, however, he says, to a period much later than the active oral Torah of the priests, and he reduces the Mosaic elements in it to the barest minimum, scarcely even admitting the Mosaic origin of the Decalogue.

So that the alleged oral Torah, on the hypothesis, rests upon nothing but immemorial custom, each decision as it

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 392.

was given constituting a Torah or law to meet the case in hand. That this was the way the law arose, and not by the promulgation of a set of statutes, is said to be indicated by a chapter in Exodus (xviii.), which represents Moses himself as sitting hearing cases in person, and deciding each case on its own merits. But this very chapter, so much relied upon, seems itself to draw the distinction between legislation and administration. Moses is represented as discharging both functions; but the chapter tells how he was advised to separate them. He set over the people able men, who were to judge the people in small matters, reserving the "great matters" for his own decision. If the critics are prepared to take this chapter as a plain historical statement, then we get a positive starting-point for Mosaic law, and that, too, of a pretty comprehensive compass. For if the decisions on great matters were given by Moses, we have Mosaic legislation, since his sentences were given (presumably) on new cases or were regulations of older usages; and the small matters doubtless were controlled by precedents set by him. There is no reason to assume that such decisions as were given by Moses and his assessors remained unwritten, or in flux, till the time to which the book of the Covenant is brought down; and it is to be noted how care was taken, by the appointment of capable judges and by the *teaching* of the "statutes," that uniformity and consistency should be maintained. Unless, indeed, there was some guiding rule, the decisions could not have remained consistent with themselves, and could never have assumed a shape in which, collectively, they would have acquired respect. So in the passage already cited from the Blessing of Moses, where it is described as the function of Levi to teach the people the

law, there is presumably something definite and positive to be taught; just as the second half of the verse speaks of the offerings which they had to present on the altar. Wellhausen's position, so confidently assumed, that the "teaching is only thought of as the action of the teacher" —if the teaching is to have any consistency at all—seems to me only conceivable on the supposition of a guidance of the teacher, an inspiration, in fact, of a kind that I fancy Wellhausen would be the last to admit. It is, besides, flatly contradicted by such a passage as Hosea iv. 6, where the priest is reproached (according to the common interpretation which applies the passage to the priestly class) for having forgotten the law of God, as indeed by all the passages which reprove the priests for unfaithfulness. If everything taught by the priest was Torah, with no guiding norm, such reproofs were out of place. Yet it is to be observed that the prophets, whatever they may say about the priests as a class, always speak of their Torah as a thing of unquestioned authority; and they were not the men to speak thus of the haphazard decisions on "law and morals" given by a class which was too often both lawless and immoral. Looking at it from any possible point of view, in the face of this persistent ascription of law to Moses, we are bound to assume something positive and plain, of such a character that a priesthood, often ignorant and corrupt, would be guided to give forth sentences that prophetic men could speak of with respect. To say nothing of the intricate cases of ceremonial cleanness and defilement, which Wellhausen admits constituted an element of the Torah, there were also "law and morals," as he tells us, and there must have been countless cases of casuistry and jurisprudence calling for decision at the mouth of these men, from whom there was no appeal; and the

whole, when collected, forms, we are to suppose, the legislation on these subjects which afterwards became systematised into codes. Moreover, there were the matters relating to the right performance of priestly functions and the proper observance of sacred ceremonies. Wellhausen indeed says positively—although on no positive evidence—that "the priests' own praxis [at the altar] never constituted, in pre-exilian antiquity, the contents of the Torah."[1] Yet, considering the punctilious observance that must have been required in such services, and the jealousy of a priestly class to maintain forms in their rigour, one would have expected that just in matters of this kind the Torah, whether oral or written, would be most definite. Although there was no need for the priests to instruct the laity in these matters, they were of such a kind as would suggest the writing of them down in longer or shorter collections to aid the memory of the priests themselves, to guide the partially initiated, and to secure accurate preservation. Many of the laws of Leviticus, in fact, to an ordinary reader, have the appearance of "memoranda" which might be ready at hand for instruction in such functions. The insistence on the authority of law, combined with the reproof of the priesthood, can thus have but one meaning—viz., that the priests were in possession of an ancient authoritative norm, according to which even ignorant men with technical training could have no excuse for going astray.

The priests' function, indeed, was to give instruction to the people, but the fact that they did so orally is no proof that there was no written or objective standard by which they taught. Nay, we have positive proof to the contrary. Both in Haggai (ii. 11) and in Malachi (ii. 7), by whose

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 59, note.

time certainly the law was codified and recognised, there is mention of the oral teaching of the priests. And if oral instruction was necessary at that time, though co-existent with a written law, we are not bound to conclude when Micah, for example, speaks of the priests of his time teaching for hire (Micah iii. 11), that they drew upon a tradition which was entirely in their own possession. We have still Christian pastors and teachers, although the Scriptures are in every one's hands, and expounders of the law would be more necessary in ages when printing was unknown and books rare. Indeed, if at a late time, when the law was fully codified, there was need of oral exposition, much more would oral instruction require a definite basis at the earlier periods when priests and people were so tempted to fall into corruption. Yet during even the worst times the prophets have no doubt of the purity and fixity of the priestly Torah. In speaking of the instruction of the priests, they regard it as a thing superior to and binding upon the class and the people. "Sentences," "judgments," "statutes" could have had no coherency apart from a standard. It need not of course be concluded, that wherever "law" occurs there is a reference to the Pentateuch as a whole, or to any *book* whatever in the modern sense. But the alternative is not, as seems to be hastily assumed, that there was no concrete law nor written code of guidance—nothing, in short, but oral law, still in process of being delivered. Such a supposition is in itself hardly conceivable, considering the conditions of the nation and the long period over which this oral law is said to extend; nor is it supported by an unforced exegesis of the prophetic utterances.

(2.) We have next to consider the assertion that the ceremonies and observances of the religion of Israel were

not matters of divine authoritative appointment at first, but were the growth of custom.

"In the early days," says Wellhausen, "worship arose out of the midst of ordinary life, and was in most intimate and manifold connection with it. A sacrifice was a meal—a fact showing how remote was the idea of antithesis between spiritual earnestness and secular joyousness. . . . Year after year the return of vintage, corn-harvest, and sheep-shearing brought together the members of the household to eat and to drink in the presence of Jehovah; and besides these, there were less regularly recurring events which were celebrated in one circle after another. . . . The occasion arising out of daily life is thus inseparable from the holy action, and is what gives it meaning and character; an end corresponding to the situation always underlies it." [1]

And this is the case even in regard to the more distinctively national feasts:—

"It cannot be doubted, generally speaking and on the whole, that not only in the Jehovistic but also in the Deuteronomic legislation [2] the festivals rest upon agriculture, the basis at once of life and of religion. The soil, the fruitful soil, is the object of religion; it takes the place alike of heaven and of hell. Jehovah gives the land and its produce. He receives the best of what it yields as an expression of thankfulness, the tithes in recognition of his seignorial right. The relation between Himself and His people first arose from His having given them the land in fee; it continues to be maintained, inasmuch as good weather and fertility come from Him." [3]

So that the great feasts, which were the prominent features of the worship, are ultimately traceable to the Canaanites, just like Nabiism, which was a chief characteristic of the religion. For—

"Agriculture was learned by the Hebrews from the Canaanites, in whose land they settled, and in commingling with whom they,

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[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 76.

[2] These two stages of legislation, as will appear in the sequel, are placed by the critical school, the former in the earlier writing period, and the latter about 621 B.C.

[3] Hist. of Israel, p. 91 f.

during the period of the Judges, made the transition to a sedentary life. Before the metamorphosis of shepherds into peasants was effected, they could not possibly have had feasts which related to agriculture. It would have been strange if they had not taken them also over from the Canaanites. The latter owed the land and its fruits to Baal, and for this they paid him the due tribute; the Israelites stood in the same relation to Jehovah. Materially and in itself the act was neither heathenish nor Israelite; its character either way was determined by its destination. There was therefore nothing against a transference of the feasts from Baal to Jehovah; on the contrary, the transference was a profession of faith that the land and its produce, and thus all that lay at the foundations of the national existence, were due not to the heathen deity, but to the God of Israel." [1]

The transition from this simpler and more naturalistic phase of worship to distinctively religious and non-secular observance took place, according to the theory, in connection with and in consequence of the movement for centralisation of worship, that culminated in the introduction of the Deuteronomic Code and the reform in the time of Josiah. The view is, that up to that time the worship at the Bamoth or high places up and down the land [2] was the regular and normal thing, and that the reform of Josiah abolished these local sanctuaries, and concentrated the worship at the one sanctuary at Jerusalem, thus severing the connection between the old joyous religious worship and the daily life (p. 77). "Deuteronomy indeed does not contemplate such a result," and, as we have already seen, the assertion is that still in the Deuteronomic legislation the festivals rest upon agriculture. The transition was only fully effected in the Priestly Code (which dates at the earliest from the time of Ezra).

"Human life has its root in local environment, and so also had the ancient cultus; in being transplanted from its natural soil

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 93 f.

[2] See before, chap. viii. p. 199 ff.

it was deprived of its natural nourishment. A separation between it and the daily life was inevitable, and Deuteronomy itself paved the way for this result by permitting profane slaughtering. A man lived in Hebron, but sacrificed in Jerusalem ; life and worship fell apart. The consequences which lie dormant in the Deuteronomic law are fully developed in the Priestly Code" (ibid., p. 77).

And then as to the distinctively historical references which the feasts eventually attained, Wellhausen says:—

"It is in Deuteronomy that one detects the first very perceptible traces of a historical dress being given to the religion and the worship, but this process is still confined within modest limits. The historical event to which recurrence is always made is the bringing up of Israel out of Egypt, and this is significant in so far as the bringing up out of Egypt coincides with the leading into Canaan, that is, with the giving of the land, so that the historical motive again resolves itself into the natural. In this way it can be said that not merely the Easter festival but all festivals are dependent upon the introduction of Israel into Canaan, and this is what we actually find very clearly in the prayer (Deut. xxvi.) with which at the Feast of Tabernacles the share of the festal gifts falling to the priest is offered to the Deity" (ibid., p. 92).

It is, however, as has been said, in the Priestly Code that the development is fully carried out, and

"the feasts entirely lose their peculiar characteristics, the occasions by which they are inspired and distinguished : by the monotonous sameness of the unvarying burnt-offering and sin-offering of the community as a whole, they are all put on the same even level, deprived of their natural spontaneity, and degraded into mere 'exercises of religion.' Only some very slight traces continue to bear witness to, we might rather say to betray, what was the point from which the development started—namely, the rites of the barley-sheaf, the loaves of bread, and the booths (Levit. xxiii.) But these are mere rites, petrified remains of the old custom" (ibid., p. 100).

There is a certain coherence and roundness about this theory that make it very specious ; but unfortunately it

is supported by little positive proof, and it fails, besides, to give an adequate account of well-established facts.

(*a*) In the first place, no one can object to the statement that "religious worship was a natural thing in Hebrew antiquity; it was the blossom of life, the heights and depths of which it was its business to transfigure and glorify" (p. 77). But just because it was so, we should have expected the worship to pass beyond the ordinary level of the soil to those "heights and depths" which had been reached in connection with the early national history. It is simply inconceivable that a people who were ever erecting pillars and offering sacrifices to commemorate deliverances or celebrate victories, who associated ever so many places with events in their religious history, and who had, from the time of Moses, passed through an unparalleled experience, should still, in the time of Hosea or later, have practised merely a worship whose sole motives were "threshing-floor and wine-press, corn and wine," and "vociferous joy, merry snoutings its expression" (p. 98). By the time of Hosea, Israel had lived through a very considerable part of its national and political existence, and by the days of Josiah that life had wellnigh run its course. Yet Wellhausen would have us believe that, even as late as the time of Josiah, the first perceptible trace is visible of a historical reference in the worship, and that, in the time of Hosea,

"the blessing of the land is the end of religion, and that quite generally—alike of the false heathenish and of the true Israelitish. It has for its basis no historical acts of salvation, but nature simply, which, however, is regarded only as God's domain and as man's field of labour, and is in no manner deified. The land is Jehovah's house,[1] wherein He lodges, and entertains the nation; in the land

[1] Hosea viii. 1, ix. 15.

and through the land it is that Israel first becomes the people of Jehovah. . . . In accordance with this, worship consists simply of the thanksgiving due for the gifts of the soil, the vassalage payable to the superior who has given the land and its fruits" (p. 97).

In opposition to this low and narrow view of the conceptions of that time, we can point to the fact before considered,[1] that Hosea dates the intimate union between Jahaveh and His people from the exodus and the desert life, before the land had become "Jehovah's house." In the very passages which Wellhausen here cites, a distinction is drawn between the Baalim (unlawful lovers) and Jahaveh (the rightful husband), as if to prove that it was *not* "through the land that Israel first became the people of Jehovah." No doubt an agricultural people, if they would offer anything to their God, must offer what they had,—the fruits of the land; but does a Christian who gives his money for missions, let us say, recognise no blessing that God has bestowed upon him but silver and gold? No doubt Hosea and all the prophets, early and late, connect the fertility of the land and material prosperity with the blessing of Jahaveh and the fidelity of His people, as many people still do.[2] But the thing to be noted is that Hosea, appealing to the consciousness of the men of his time, reminds them of God's doings for them

[1] See chap. v. p. 110.

[2] Wellhausen's own opinion is frankly stated in another place. In speaking of Samuel's words, "God forbid that I should cease to pray for you and teach you the good way" (1 Sam. xii. 23), he makes the comment: "They do not need to trouble themselves about means for warding off the attacks of their enemies; if they fast and pray, and give up their sins, Jehovah hurls back the foe with His thunder and lightning, and so long as they are pious He will not allow their land to be invaded. All the expenses are then naturally superfluous by which a people usually safeguards its own existence. That this view is unhistorical is self-evident. . . . It is the offspring of exilic or post-exilic Judaism."—Hist. of Israel, p. 255.

as a people in the early days. His very reproof, in the connection appealed to, is one against unfaithfulness to Him who had betrothed Israel to Himself before they came into Canaan; and "I refuse to believe" (to adopt one of Wellhausen's modes of reasoning[1]) that a prophet with views so advanced as Hosea saw no more in worship than an acknowledgment of vassalage, payable to the superior of the land, whoever he might be. Yet not only in the days of Hosea, but two centuries later, Wellhausen would have us believe that Israel was in this condition, for "it is in Deuteronomy that one detects the first very perceptible traces[2] of a historical dress being given to the religion and the worship." That it is, however, "confined within modest limits," he tries to prove from the prayer or hymn which was uttered at the presentation of fruits. He quotes the prayer at length, but if it has any meaning at all, every clause of it contradicts the conclusion built upon it:—

"A wandering Aramæan was my father; and he went down to Egypt, and sojourned there a few men strong, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous. And the Egyptians evil entreated them, and oppressed them, and laid upon them hard bondage. Then called we upon Jehovah, the God of our fathers, and He heard our voice, and looked on our affliction, and our labour, and our oppression. And Jehovah brought us forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terribleness, and with signs, and with wonders; *and brought us unto this place, and gave us this land, a land where milk and honey flow. And now, behold, I have brought the best of the fruits of the land which Thou, O Lord, hast given me*" (Deut. xxvi.)

Wellhausen emphasises the words put in italics, and concludes triumphantly (p. 92), "Observe here how the

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 51.

[2] Compare Kuenen's account of "nascent monotheism" at the same period. See above, chap. xii. p. 320.

act of salvation whereby Israel was founded issues in the gift of a fruitful land." We all knew that, as we also knew that the only gift which Israel could offer in return was the produce of the land. But what of all the other blessings, of a *national and religious kind*, which are heaped up, clause by clause, as if the suppliant would stir up his soul, and all that was within him, to forget not all the benefits bestowed upon the nation? "*He* went down. . . . The Egyptians evil entreated *them*. . . . He heard *our* voice and brought *us* forth." If the author of this prayer had not a clear recognition of the unity of the nation from the time of the patriarchs, and of the national blessings from first to last which they had received, then language has no meaning. It seems to me that this little basket of fruit, like Gideon's cake of barley-bread, upsets the whole array of Wellhausen's well-marshalled argument of feasts taken over from the Canaanites, and tribute offered indifferently to Baal or Jahaveh, as lord paramount of the land, not to speak of "the soil, the fruitful soil, taking the place alike of heaven and hell." As to the references to agricultural matters in even the earliest code, the book of the Covenant, which are made so much of to prove that this legislation could have had no existence till Israel came into Palestine, it is enough to say that it is taken for granted that Moses had no knowledge of agricultural situations, and that he had no idea he was leading his people into a country like Palestine, or no forethought to give them guidance for their ordinary life in it; for none of which have critical writers any authority.[1]

(*b*) Again, an influence altogether exaggerated is ascribed to the centralisation of worship. This, indeed,

[1] See Note XXIV.

is Wellhausen's strong point, on which he rests his whole theory. "My whole position," he says, "is contained in my first chapter [entitled, The Place of Worship]; there I have placed in a clear light that which is of such importance for Israelite history—namely, the part taken by the prophetical party in the great metamorphosis of the worship, which by no means came about of itself."[1] Speaking of Hosea and Amos, he says:—

> "The language held by these men was one hitherto unheard of, when they declared that Gilgal, and Bethel, and Beersheba, Jehovah's favourite seats, were an abomination to Him; that the gifts and offerings with which He was honoured there kindled His wrath instead of appeasing it; that Israel was destined to be buried under the ruins of His temples, where protection and refuge were sought (Amos ix.) . . . That the holy places should be abolished, but the cultus itself remain as before the main concern of religion, only limited to a single locality, was by no means their wish. But at the same time, in point of fact, it came about as an incidental result of their teaching that the high place of Jerusalem ultimately abolished all the other Bamoth. External circumstances, it must be added, contributed most essentially towards the result" (p. 23 f.)

He then goes on to explain (p. 24) how the downfall of the kingdom of Samaria left the way clear for the sanctuary at Jerusalem to assume importance. Still, although Hezekiah is said to have even in his time made an attempt to abolish the Bamoth (p. 25),[2] it was not till about a century after the destruction of Samaria that men ventured "to draw the practical conclusion from the belief in the unique character of the temple at Jerusalem" (p. 26). This was done, not "from a mere desire to be logical, but with a view to further reforms;" and so prophets and priests combined to prepare the Code of

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 368.

[2] See below, p, 450.

Deuteronomy, which was officially and for the first time to authorise the Jerusalem Temple as the place of worship.

"The turning-point in the history of the sacrificial system was the reformation of Josiah; what we find in the Priestly Code is the matured result of that event" (p. 76).

"The spiritualisation of the worship is seen in the Priestly Code as advancing *pari passu* with its centralisation. It receives, so to speak, an *abstract* religious character; it separates itself, in the first instance, from daily life, and then absorbs the latter by becoming, strictly speaking, its proper business" (p. 81).

Of the alleged influence of the prophets in bringing about centralisation of worship and codification of the law, and also of the alleged discrepancy of the three Codes, we shall have to speak at length in the sequel. In the meantime, attention must be drawn to this effect of centralisation on the spirit and heartiness of the worship. Wellhausen's idea is, that "to celebrate the vintage festival among one's native hills, and to celebrate it at Jerusalem, were two very different things;" that "it was not the same thing to appear by one's self at home before Jehovah, and to lose one's self in a large congregation at the common seat of worship" (p. 77); and hence that the old joyousness of the feasts was destroyed by the celebration at the Temple at Jerusalem. Now, admitting for a moment that this centralisation took place in the way he explains, it simply is not the fact that the joyous feature disappeared. Delitzsch has shown[1] that in the period of the second Temple, when the Priestly Code received paramount attention, and when the national

[1] "Dancing and the Criticism of the Pentateuch in relation to one another," now published along with other papers in 'Iris, Studies in Colour and Talks about Flowers,' 1889.

life was none of the happiest, even the most solemn feasts of Israel were occasions of joyful merrymaking, and some of them remarkably so. It is shallow and unnatural to speak, in this connection, of "the antithesis between spiritual earnestness and secular joyousness" (p. 76). For a people, as Delitzsch says, "is and remains a natural, not a spiritual quantity, and therefore celebrates even religious festivals with a natural outburst of feeling, simple mirth, jubilant exultation. It lies in the nature of a people as such."[1] We have only to think of the infectious influence of a great throng at any public celebration, of the thorough and hearty manner in which all Orientals enter into any occasion of public rejoicing, and finally, of the aid to enjoyment furnished by the kindly climate, to see that Wellhausen's position is altogether opposed to human experience. And over against this sapient talk of the individual losing himself in the great crowd, and the depressing influence of "exercises of religion," I would simply set those psalms that speak of the festive throng, and express the psalmist's delight in the public celebrations of religion. If these psalms be early, or if they be late, they tell equally against the theory; for they exhibit a delight not only in nature, but in the God of nature, and above all, in the service of a God who had, in the nation's history, done great things for them, whereof they were glad.

(*c*) Once more, Wellhausen fails to prove that mere nature feasts passed over in the time he mentions into the religious festivals of the Deuteronomic or Priestly Codes. That the three great cycle feasts, Passover, Pentecost, and Succoth, fell at or were fixed at turning-points in the natural year, and that the celebration of them had pointed

[1] Iris, p. 196.

reference to the agricultural seasons, is very far from being the same as to say that they grew out of and for centuries remained merely agricultural festivals. One might as well argue that all the festivals of the "Christian year" have their sole reference to the natural seasons. What Wellhausen says of the soil being the basis of religion, has this much of truth in it, that the teachers of religion always, and rightly, sought to impress upon the people the material blessings which God bestowed. The task, however, before him is to explain how the historical references in these feasts came in, as they did come in somehow, sooner or later. Having described, as an instance of what he is pleased to call "the manner of the older worship as we are made acquainted with it in Hos. ii., ix., and elsewhere,"[1] the celebration of the vintage festival by the Canaanite population of Shechem (not very high authorities on such matters, we should say); and having referred to the yearly festival in the vineyards at Shiloh, as mentioned in the book of Judges,[2]—he looks about for proof that these or suchlike are the three cycle feasts prescribed in the book of the Covenant or Jehovistic legislation. And what does he find? "Amos and Hosea, presupposing as they do a splendid cultus and great sanctuaries, doubtless also knew of a variety of festivals, but they have no occasion to mention any one by name" (p. 95). This is extraordinary meekness in one who is in the constant habit of declaring, when a prophet does not mention a thing, that he knew nothing at all about it because it had no existence. But stay! "More definite notices occur in Isaiah. The threatening that within a year's time the Assyrians will be in the land is thus (xxix. 1) given: 'Add ye year to year, let the feasts

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 107. [2] Ibid., p. 94; Judges ix. 27, xxi. 19 f.

come round; yet I will distress Jerusalem,' and at the close of the same discourse the prophet expresses himself as follows (xxxii. 9 *seq.*): 'Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. Days upon a year shall ye be troubled, ye careless women; for the vintage shall fail, the ingathering shall not come. Ye shall smite upon the breasts, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine.'" Putting these two passages together, he pictures Isaiah, after the universal custom of the prophets, coming forward at a great popular autumn festival, in which the women also took an active part. But this autumn festival, he argues, takes place at the change of the year, as may be inferred from the phrase "let the feasts come round," and "closes a cycle of festivals here for the first time indicated" (p. 95). It gives me pleasure to say that I quite agree with the sentence that follows: "The preceding survey, it must be admitted, scarcely seems fully to establish the alleged agreement between the Jehovistic law and the older praxis." "Names," he goes on to remark, "are nowhere to be found, and in point of fact it is only the autumn festival that is well attested, and this, it would appear, as the only festival, as *the* feast. And doubtless it was also the oldest and most important of the harvest festivals, as it never ceased to be the concluding solemnity of the year." All that needs to be said on this part of the argument is this: Isaiah's reference to feasts "coming round" may quite as suitably apply to feasts which have a religious and historical meaning as to purely agricultural celebrations, and his references in the close of his address, if they are not indeed quite general, may equally apply to the feasts as they are prescribed in the law. If on these slight notices the modern

critics are satisfied to base the proof of a set cycle of agricultural feasts, we ought to hear less of the argument from silence as conclusive of the non-existence of the Mosaic feasts: but of this again.[1] Attention should be given to the difficulty experienced by Wellhausen in accounting for the historical reference which undoubtedly is attached to the feasts in the Codes, even in the earliest.[2]

"According as stress is laid upon the common character of the festival and uniformity in its observance, in precisely the same degree does it become separated from the roots from which it sprang, and grow more and more abstract. That it is then very ready to assume a historical meaning may partly also be attributed to the circumstance that history is not, like harvest, a personal experience of individual households, but rather an experience of the nation as a whole. One does not fail to observe, of course, that the festivals —which always to a certain degree have a centralising tendency— have *in themselves* a disposition to become removed from the particular motives of their institution, but in no part of the legislation has this gone so far as in the Priestly Code" (p. 103).

"For after they have lost their original contents and degenerated into mere prescribed religious forms, there is nothing to prevent the refilling of the empty bottles in any way accordant with the tastes of the period" (p. 102).

And so, in a word—

"One can characterise the entire Priestly Code as the wilderness legislation, inasmuch as it abstracts from the natural conditions and motives of the actual life of the people in the land of Canaan, and rears the hierocracy on the *tabula rasa* of the wilderness, the negation of nature, by means of the bald statutes of arbitrary absolutism" (p. 104).

A great deal of this mode of representing the Priestly Code arises from ignoring or misstating the character of that Code, which is brief, terse, technical, a manual for ceremonial to the priests, rather than a book of exhorta-

[1] See below, p. 401.

[2] See Exod. xxiii. 15.

tion and guidance to the people like Deuteronomy. For the rest, Wellhausen fails entirely to show any occasion for this *late* turning of the reference from agriculture to national history. These ceremonies, we are to suppose, went on from year to year with their accompaniments of presentation of fruits and so forth. That is to say, they were never "separated from the roots from which they sprang." The mere fact of centralisation might add to the richness of the ceremonies, as is always the case; but this, one would suppose, would prevent them from becoming "more and more abstract." The people were as much an agricultural people after Josiah's time as before; probably they were much less of a mercantile people than they had been at an earlier period of the monarchy. If the great events of the exodus, the conquest of Canaan, and in general the experiences which had made them a nation, did not impress the national consciousness when it was plastic and fresh, are we to suppose that, for the first time when foreign nations were about to sweep them away, they began to read into their worship and ceremonial a meaning which had not occurred to them for centuries? If at a time when Hosea and Amos were reminding them of the days of the youth of the nation, and thus appealing to the strongest motives that could influence them—if at such a time there were many feasts and imposing rituals, are we to suppose that not once in all these was there a commemoration of the founding of the nation, and of the achievement of the nation's success? No doubt the feasts, at such times as those of Hosea and Amos, would be overlaid with superstitious observances. But that is not the point. Because the modern Greeks at Jerusalem make Easter a time of riot, are we to conclude that Easter does not commemorate the resurrection? What country has not,

at one time or another, thus buried its holiest associations under carnal and sensuous forms? All this does not suffice to show that the better meaning does not underlie the institution; much less that a better meaning is merely an afterthought, read into an empty form, just because it is empty. Forms are never empty in the strict sense. They are full of something. The corrupt must be purged out before the clean can be poured in; and we can find no time in Israel's history at which a *tabula rasa* was formed, and history made out of nothing. Even the critical school has to admit, as we shall see, that the Priestly Code was a gathering up of the practice which had prevailed before the exile; and without coming so far down, we see enough already in the Deuteronomic Code to convince us that the historical reference was full and clear when that Code was drawn up. Nay, even in the Jehovistic book of the Covenant, the Passover is made distinctly to refer to the coming out of Egypt.

Wellhausen's difficulties over the Passover may indeed be pointed to as evidence of the weakness of his theory at its foundation. The following is his account of the matter: As the Israelites were a pastoral people before they became agriculturists, their oldest feasts must have had a pastoral basis (p. 92 f.) The Passover is a remnant of these, and is, from the nature of the case, the oldest of all the feasts, its primary form being the offering of the firstlings; and so, with perfect accuracy, it is postulated as the occasion of the exodus (p. 87). The exodus was not the occasion of the festival, but the festival the occasion, if only a pretended one, of the exodus (p. 88). "Let my people go, that they may keep a feast unto me in the wilderness, with sacrifices and cattle and sheep;"—this from the first is the demand made upon Pharaoh. And

because Pharaoh refuses to allow the Hebrews to offer to their God the firstlings of cattle that are His due, Jehovah seizes from him the first-born of men. "But it is curious," says Wellhausen (p. 93), "to notice how little prominence is afterwards given to this festival, which, from the nature of the case, is the oldest of all. It cannot have been known at all to the book of the Covenant, for there (Exod. xxii. 29, 30) the command is to leave the firstling seven days with its dam, and on the eighth day to give it to Jehovah." There are, however, two names given to this feast, *Mazzoth* (or unleavened bread), and *Pesach* (passover). The latter indicates the original character of the feast, as a sacrifice of the first-born; but the other name throws light upon the manner in which this came into the cycle of the agricultural feasts. *Mazzoth*, or unleavened bread, denotes the hastily made cake of the first corn, which was eaten at the time the sickle was first put in to commence the harvest, when a sheaf was presented to the Lord. This happened at the season of the year when tradition fixed the exodus, the spring; and in the account of the exodus it is mentioned (Exod. xii. 34) that in their haste to leave Egypt the Israelites "took their dough before it was leavened;" and these two circumstances assisted in the transition of the conception to a commemorative feast. "Probably," says Wellhausen, "through the predominance gained by agriculture, and the feasts founded on it, the Passover [in its original sense] fell into disuse in many parts of Israel, and kept its ground only in districts where the pastoral and wilderness life still retained its importance" (p. 93). "The elaboration of the historical motive of the Passover," however, we are told, "is not earlier than Deuteronomy, although perhaps a certain inclination to that way of explaining it appears before then, just as in

the case of the *Mazzoth* (Exod. xii. 34). What has led to it is evidently the coincidence of the spring festival with the exodus, already accepted by the older tradition, the relation of cause and effect having become inverted in course of time" (p. 88).

A very ingenious piece of patch-work! But the facts are these: The book of the Covenant (Exod. xxiii. 15, 16), and the related Law of the Two Tables (Exod. xxxiv. 18 f.), which are said by critics to be older by at least two centuries than the Code of Deuteronomy, call the feast Mazzoth or unleavened bread, and in both cases give the reason for keeping the feast that in the month Abib the people came out of Egypt. The Code of Deuteronomy, according to Wellhausen's own authority (p. 87), is the first that mentions *Pesach*, but it has the name Mazzoth as well; and the elaboration of the historical motive, he has just told us, is not earlier than Deuteronomy. "The only view," he says, "sanctioned by the nature of the case is, that the Israelite custom of offering the firstlings gave rise to the narrative of the slaying of the first-born of Egypt: unless the custom be presupposed, the story is inexplicable, and the peculiar selection of its victims by the plague is left without a motive" (p. 88). As to this conclusion, if critics are to determine historical questions by the nature of the case as they judge it, and to assume a liberty of putting effects for causes when it suits them, we may get startling "scientific results," but we make no solid progress. What requires explanation is the fact that Mazzoth is mentioned as a feast commemorative of the exodus, in what is pronounced the earliest legislation, and no reference made therein to the offering of the firstlings; and that only two centuries later the name which is supposed to point to the original character of

the feast is for the first time employed, and yet the description of the feast agrees (only being fuller) with the older. The truth is, as any fair-minded person may see, this laborious attempt to foist in the historical reference at a late date breaks down just because the historical reference was present from the first. The fundamental fallacy of this whole argument is the assumption that "in the land and through the land it is that Israel first becomes the people of Jehovah." For this assertion there is not a scrap of evidence, whereas the concurrent testimony of all Israelite antiquity is, that it was because He had chosen this people, and after he had signalised His choice, that He brought them into a goodly land. And the conclusion of the matter is, that as there was a formal system of law at a much earlier time than the critical theory postulates, so also there was an earlier reference in their worship and ceremonial to the events in the nation's religious history which marked them out as Jahaveh's people.

CHAPTER XV.

THE THREE CODES.

The legislative elements in the Pentateuch a subject of difficulty—The traditional theory makes it unnecessarily difficult, while the critical theory raises greater difficulties—The three positions of the modern theory as to the Codes: I. there are three Codes; II. far apart in time; and III. inconsistent with one another—As to I. there is nothing inconsistent with Biblical theory or nature of the case in variation or progression of Codes—Law is modified even after it is codified—II. But the critical position is that the Codes belong to times far apart—How this conclusion is reached—The evidence of dates is inferential—Argument examined—The book of the Covenant—No satisfactory account given of introduction of this Code at the alleged time, and why codification, once begun, should have stopped for two centuries—What happened in the intervals of the Codes?—Wellhausen's position, legem non habentes, *&c. —The two points involved in this position:* (1) *argument from silence and non-observance;* (2) *praxis and programme—III. Alleged inconsistency of the Codes, particularly as to the centralisation of worship—The argument examined.*

The legislative parts of the books of the Pentateuch, in their form and setting no less than in their contents, present many difficulties. The laws are found, not collected together and systematised, but scattered over several books. Not only is there a repetition in one collection of what may be found in another, but the same laws may be repeated with little or no alteration in the same

collection.[1] And then there are discrepancies in the regulations found in different places on the same subject; and laws relating to subjects apparently the most diverse are brought into strange juxtaposition, as also are laws bearing upon what seem very different conditions of life and states of society. We should have expected a writer, if he were the author of all the legislation, to work more systematically: whether he was early and looked forward to the future, or late and looked back upon the past, we should have expected a better arrangement of details, a more completed whole. On what is called the traditional theory, that Moses not only gave the law, but wrote substantially the books in which it is contained, the literary difficulties are very great indeed, and the expedients that have been resorted to in order to remove them are very often artificial and hazardous. The modern critical theory, on the other hand, starting with a good motive, gets involved in what I consider a vicious method, and ends by raising greater difficulties than those which it attempts to remove. Advocates of the traditional theory burden themselves with an unnecessary difficulty by assuming that the books of the Pentateuch were written by Moses; for the books do not say so of themselves, and even the older Jewish tradition that Ezra "restored" the law, pointed to redaction as a probable solution of many of the difficulties. Too much praise cannot be given to those who have laboured in the field of Pentateuch criticism, for the minute examination they have made of details, in the endeavour to sift and distinguish the sources; and as a literary feat, the labour may be pronounced on the whole successful, although it will hardly be asserted that the

[1] Compare Num. xv. 1-16 with Levit. i.-vii.; Num. v. 5-10 with Levit. v. 5 ff., vi. 5 ff.; Num. xv. 22-28 with Levit. iv. 13 ff.

last word on the subject has yet been spoken.[1] At the same time, it seems to me that the difficulties of the critical theory increase at every step when the attempt is made to determine the origin of the Codes, and their relation to one another and to the history. The three leading positions of the modern critical theory are: I. That there are three distinct Codes of Law. II. That these belong to three different periods far separate. III. That on essential points the Codes differ. How these positions are established, and what consequences are drawn from them, will be seen as we proceed.

I. By a process of critical analysis, into which we do not here enter at length, the legislation contained in the Pentateuch is divided into various Codes, distinguished by certain literary and material characteristics. (1.) The Code contained in Deuteronomy stands by itself, marked by a certain hortatory tone, and by the absence of the minute ritual prescriptions and distinctions found particularly in the book of Leviticus. (2.) There is also distinguished a book of the Covenant attached to the Jehovistic historical portion of the Pentateuch, and embraced in Exod. xx.-xxiii.; closely related to which, and usually classed along with it, is chap. xxxiv. of the same book, sometimes called the Law of the Two Tables. (3.) Then, in the remaining parts of Exodus, in the whole of Leviticus, and in some chapters of Numbers, are found a number of laws, moral, civil, and ceremonial, which are all classed together as the Levitical Code or Priestly Code, so named from the prevalence of the ritual element in its contents. A portion of this Code, contained in Levit. xvii.-xxvi., is sometimes spoken of as a code or collection by itself, the "law of holiness," and supposed to have a

[1] See Note XXVI.

special history of its own. Moreover, there is a collection of regulations, mostly ritual, found in Ezekiel (from chap. xl. onwards) which it is customary to take into account in the critical history of the Codes. So far as the legislation of the Pentateuch, however, is concerned, we have to deal with the three collections—the Jehovistic book of the Covenant (with related chapter), the Deuteronomic Code, and the Priestly Code; and it is maintained that they are to be historically arranged in the order in which they have just been mentioned.

So far there is nothing in the modern theory essentially incompatible with the Biblical account of the matter, except the order of the Codes. The Biblical order is: Book of the Covenant, Levitical Code, Deuteronomic Code; but they are ascribed to different times, although these periods all fall within the lifetime of Moses. There is nothing unreasonable in itself in the supposition that laws or codes of laws were promulgated at different times; and different sets of laws, so given, for special purposes or on special occasions, might run severally their respective literary courses. Nor is it difficult to conceive how such several collections might overlap one another, and after a time have certain features of inconsistency. The law-books themselves give us to understand that, as the situation of the people changed, the law had a varying reference, and even that a law on a certain subject might be abrogated or modified to suit altered circumstances. So that, even in the Biblical theory, not to speak of what is known of the course of law generally, it is possible for law to undergo modification even after it is codified. We find, for example, within the compass of one book, a modification in the age at which the Levites were to serve at

the sanctuary.[1] Music of an elaborate kind, we know, was introduced into the Temple service, though it is not prescribed, as we should expect to find it, in the Levitical Code. Again, the law of inheritance, contained in Num. xxvii., is modified within the Levitical Code itself by Num. xxxvi.; and it is notorious that by New Testament times and in modern Jewish usage there are modifications in the manner of celebrating the Passover, particularly in the use of wine and certain hymns, that constitute very considerable variations from the ceremonial prescribed in the law. Nay, Ezra, to whom, on the modern theory, the introduction of the Priestly Code is ascribed, makes a modification on the amount of the tax payable for the expenses of the Temple,[2] fixing it at a third of a shekel, whereas the code which he is said to have drawn up fixes it at half a shekel.[3]

It seems, therefore, reasonable to suppose that, just as the Passover is an institution of ancient Israel, although it has gathered about it usages of a comparatively recent time, so many of the laws contained in the Pentateuch may, before reaching the form in which they now stand, have been modified, through changing circumstances in the national life, and yet be in their origin and character Mosaic. Even if we supposed that all the laws of the Pentateuch were originally written down by Moses—though the Biblical writers never say that they were—there is the probability—nay, the certainty—that these were copied from time to time in whole or in portions. And seeing that practice, in regard to some things at least, varied, and there was no hesitation about introducing

[1] Num. iv. 3, viii. 24; comp. also 1 Chron. xxiii. 3, 27; 2 Chron. xxxi. 17.
[2] Neh. x. 32 ff.
[3] Exod. xxx. 13.

certain alterations in the observances, the transcriber in a later age, in writing out a code for practical use, might, so to speak, translate the details of prevailing ordinances into the language of his own time, and describe the thing in the form in which he knew it. If such a double process went on, it would go far to account for the strange mixture of new and old that we find in these laws, some relating to and only practicable in the desert life or a more primitive state of society, and others denoting a time when the national life was in a more consolidated position. In short, we should have before us a kind of history of the observances, on the understanding, however, that the rites had been observed. The aspect of the Levitical Code, in particular, is hardly intelligible on any other supposition. To say that it was all drawn up at one time by persons setting themselves to the systematic work of framing a code without written materials before them, is to ascribe to the writers either great want of skill on the one theory, or a design to deceive on the other. In view of the only statements which the Biblical writers themselves make on the subject, there is nothing to preclude the supposition of various editings of the laws at different times, while yet the system as a whole, and even the three separate Codes, had a positive basis in Mosaic legislation.

II. This, however, does not satisfy the modern critical writers. They think they can prove, by a comparison of the Codes, and by references to history, that the Codes belong to periods very far apart. This, in fact, has been a great part of the laborious task of Pentateuch criticism; and while, on the one hand, it has been claimed that by pure literary criticism the three Codes have been distinguished from one another, it has been finally confessed, on the other hand, that the order of the Codes

and their respective dates cannot be determined solely from the Codes themselves, but must be ascertained from an examination of the historical and prophetical books which follow them in the Canon. The line of argument has been as follows: If from a consideration of the books relating to a time subsequent to Moses, we find a state of matters corresponding with the requirements of one of these Codes, it is concluded that the Code in question was known and recognised and in operation; if, on the contrary, the state of matters shows that what were the requirements of any one Code were not put in force, and were ignored not only by the people, but by the religious leaders and guides of the people, we conclude that such a Code, not receiving official recognition, was in fact non-existent. According to this principle, then, it is argued that the Deuteronomic Code was not known, and therefore was not existent till the time of Josiah; because up to that time not only the nation at large, but even the religious teachers of the nation, openly and without compunction practised the worship of Jahaveh at the high places, in direct contradiction to the command reiterated in Deuteronomy, that there was to be a central sanctuary, at which alone the formal rites of worship were permissible. In the same way, it is argued that the distinction of priests and Levites so clearly marked in the Levitical Code did not in fact come into existence till after the Deuteronomic Code; that many of the laws contained in the Levitical Code were not known, and did not exist till the time of Ezra; and therefore that the Levitical Code as a whole belongs to the time of Ezra, or even a subsequent date. The order of the Codes, therefore, on this view, is—Book of the Covenant, Deuteronomic Code, Levitical Code, and they are separated by wide

distances; for whereas the book of the Covenant belongs to the earliest period of written composition—the century B.C. 850-750—the next in order, the Deuteronomic, comes at least two centuries later—viz., in 621 B.C.; and the Levitical Code, if placed, at the earliest, in the time of Ezra, falls two centuries later still—viz., about 444 B.C.

It does not require to be said that there is no direct historical evidence of the introduction of the various Codes at the dates assigned. It is by a process of inference from the history, and by a comparison of the Codes, that the conclusions are reached that under certain definite historical circumstances each successive Code was introduced, and that certain appreciable influences were at work to bring about their acceptance. Let us therefore look a little more closely at what the position implies, and how it is related to certain admitted facts.

It is obvious that the general position here is part of the whole scheme of reconstructed history, according to which the law came gradually into existence and authoritative recognition. In connection with this part of the argument, the positions considered in the preceding chapters should be borne in mind, as to the alleged *basis* of the law in custom and in spontaneous nature feasts, because we ought now to find some precise information as to the circumstances that led to the stamping of custom with authority, and the transition from a mere nature reference to religious significance. We come, in fact, face to face with the questions, when and under what circumstances the respective laws became *codified.*

Critical writers prefer to commence their investigations with Deuteronomy; we prefer, for reasons that will appear, to take the Codes in the alleged order of their promulgation. Now it is not a little remarkable that

modern critics, while they tell us very particularly the historical circumstances under which the Deuteronomic and Priestly Codes were produced, can tell us very little about the earliest of all the Codes, the Jehovistic. Yet this is the very one which we should think must have had a controlling influence on subsequent legislation and codification. Wellhausen, it will be remembered,[1] in fixing the period at which Hebrew literature first flourished, makes this collection of laws contemporaneous with the earliest historiography, and somewhat earlier than the legends about the patriarchs and primitive times. He says[2] that both the Jehovistic law and the Jehovistic narrative "obviously belong to the pre-prophetic period"; for it is inconceivable that the prophets Hosea or Amos, or any like-minded person, could glorify (in connection with the history of the patriarchs) the local sanctuaries in the way that these narratives do. Therefore at some period earlier than the first writing prophets — earlier than or about as early as the patriarchal histories—"certain collections of laws and decisions of the priests, of which we have an example in Exodus xxi., xxii., were committed to writing." We are told in another passage that the Jehovistic history-book, whose character is best marked by the story of the patriarchs, has legislative elements taken "into it only at one point, where they fit into the historical connection—namely, when the giving of the law at Sinai is spoken of, Exod. xx.-xxiii., xxxiv." (p. 7), although soon after we are also told that "the Jehovist does not even pretend to being a Mosaic law of any kind; it aims at being a simple book of history" (p. 9). All this throws very little light upon this first collection of written laws, which, one would have thought, was epoch-making.

[1] The passage is quoted above in chap. iii. p. 60 f. [2] Hist. of Israel, p. 32.

Indeed Wellhausen goes on repeating that the Torah of Jehovah still continued to be the special charge of the priests, though "it was not even now a code or law in our sense of the word; Jehovah had not yet made His Testament; He was still living and active in Israel; . . . the Torah had still occupation enough, the progressive life of the nation ever affording matter for new questions" (p. 468). And as to the outward observances of religion, we are told "the cultus, as to place, time, matter, and form, belonged almost entirely to the inheritance which Israel had received from Canaan; to distinguish what belonged to the worship of Jehovah from that which belonged to Baal was no easy matter" (p. 469).

Now, suppose we grant that the book of the Covenant was codified as late as is here asserted, it bears on the face of it, at all events, a testimony to Mosaic authorship, and authoritative sanction, and has a strictly religious basis. It is misleading in Wellhausen to say that "the Jehovist does not even pretend to being a Mosaic law of any kind." It aims at being a true history, and it brings in this Code under definite historical conditions as given by Moses. What more do the writers of the other law-books? Moreover, to whatever extent the worship may have followed Canaanite practice, a sharp line is drawn here between Mosaic requirements and the worship of the nations (Exod. xxii. 20, xxiii. 23 ff.) Let it be supposed that this Code is merely the embodiment of praxis or the crystallisation of custom—and it is certainly more—the praxis or custom was at all events by that time of so high antiquity and invested with such authority that the Code was made Mosaic; and we ask the critics in vain for an explanation of this ascription of the very earliest laws to

a time so long antecedent, and to circumstances so positively historical.

But what we want very particularly to know is the occasion that at this precise time called for a codification of law even of this modest compass. What set the process of codification agoing at least two centuries before it occurred to any one to prepare an authoritative book of law? For this is the way in which Deuteronomy is spoken of: "The idea of making a definite formulated written Torah the law of the land is the important point; it [viz., the Deuteronomic Code] was a first attempt, and succeeded at the outset beyond expectation."[1] This book of the Covenant, however, shows that such an *idea* is much older, though the fact is simply slurred over.

Further, if this Code was the statement of the legal customs of that comparatively late time, it cannot have been the statement of the whole of them. By the time assumed the national life had taken definite form; the Temple of Solomon had long been in existence, priests as well as prophets were a numerous and influential class. The mere appearance of this Code at what is called the earliest period of literary composition presupposes, as we have argued,[2] an antecedent education and a literary activity in priestly circles. Thousands of cases of casuistry, jurisprudence, and ceremony had arisen and been settled in some way before the time this Code is alleged to have existed. At length (we are told) it had occurred to some person or persons to draw up this Code, brief though it be, in all the sententiousness of this class of composition. Now it does seem very remarkable that, a beginning having been made, at the very

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 402.

[2] See above, chap. iv. p. 105.

earliest period of written composition, the thing was entirely discontinued for at least two centuries, and *that* during a period when literary composition of other kinds attained its bloom; at a time too when the civil, religious, and commercial situations of the people were such as would demand authoritative regulation and control. A glance at the prescriptions contained in the book of the Covenant will show that it contains, though in a brief and germinal manner, legislation in all the directions that are followed out more fully in the larger Codes, and is enough to suggest the hundreds of cases and relations similar to those then provided for that must have arisen in the daily life of the people, and demanded standing rules for their settlement. If it be said that oral teaching would determine all these, we ask, Why were not such other matters as, *e.g.*, of fire arising in a corn-field, or of an ox goring a man, left to the same authority? The marvellous thing is that, codification having begun, even at the time to which this Code is assigned, it did not go on. Is there any class of literature more voluminous, more liable to grow from its own inherent impulse, than the legal? And when history, prophecy, poetry flourished, when every kind of literature, in fact, which Israel produced had reached its best before the time of Josiah, that the legal and ceremonial should have once taken a start and then stood still is surely something which it requires the faith of a modern critic to believe. It is much more probable that when Hosea speaks of the writing of ten thousand precepts,[1] he was familiar with and alluded to a literary activity in this field of composition of a much more copious extent than the brief book of the Covenant.

[1] See above, chap. xiii. p. 342.

Difficulties like these, arising out of the theory so far as it refers to the book of the Covenant, suggest other difficulties in connection with the succeeding Codes and with the process of codification in general. There is, for example, the difficulty of explaining the source of the laws embodied in the succeeding Codes. The book of Deuteronomy contains laws that relate to circumstances of the desert life, and so does the Levitical Code. Where were these laws preserved up to this time, if they had an existence at all? If they did not exist, whence came they into codes which were for quite different circumstances? Again, the Code of Deuteronomy, which is said to have been introduced for the specific purpose of centralising the worship at the Temple of Jerusalem, is singularly poor in regulations for ritual, the very thing we should have expected to be attended to, when a multitude of local sanctuaries, with presumably varying, not to say corrupted, worship, were abolished. On the other hand, the Levitical Code, drawn up, as is alleged, at a time when the Temple was in ruins and ritual worship impossible, deals above all, and in minutest detail, with ceremonial matters. One naturally asks, What was the source whence came the ritual and ceremonial laws which bulk so largely in the final Code of Leviticus? And then, what occurred in the long intervals between the successive Codes? Were these Codes sudden appearances, something quite new for their respective times, or did they come about gradually and receive acceptance as a matter of course?

It must be confessed that it is not very easy to follow the reasoning of Wellhausen in his treatment of these and suchlike questions, for he seems to be not quite consistent with himself in the positions he takes up at

different parts of his argument. For example, he says at one time that "proofs of the existence of the Priestly Code [previous to the exile] are not to be found—not a trace of them" (p. 365); that the Code was not only not operative, but "that it did not even admit of being carried into effect in the conditions that prevailed previous to the exile" (p. 12). On the other hand, he says that the "real point at issue" is "not to prove that the Mosaic law was not in force in the period before the exile;" that he and his school "do not go so far as to believe that the Israelite cultus entered the world of a sudden—as little by Ezekiel or by Ezra as by Moses;" and that it is a mistaken assumption that on the modern hypothesis "the whole cultus was invented all at once by the Priestly Code, and only introduced after the exile" (p. 366). In brief, he sums up his position in the words which he prefixes as a motto to the first part of his book, "These having not the law, do by nature the works of the law." If this merely meant, as it might at first sight seem to mean, that the respective Codes were all actually observed in some form previous to the times at which they are said to have been introduced, and that only the *writing* of them in the forms in which they appear was a matter of later date, there would not be much objection to the position; and I do not know that it would be irreconcilable with the Biblical theory; but we shall see that the hypothesis involves a much more serious assumption. It is plain that for the establishment of Wellhausen's thesis there must be historical proof of two things: (1) that the law, as expressed in the Codes, was not in the possession of Israel up to the time the Codes were introduced, according to the one half of his motto — "these having not the law;" and (2) that the things contained

in the law, the works of the law, were practised by nature — *i.e.*, without prescription — before these dates. Attention must be drawn to the different reference of the words as used by St Paul and by Wellhausen. The apostle is speaking not of a ceremonial or ritual law, but of moral principles "written on the heart," the operation of which can be traced in the Gentile world. What Wellhausen has to prove is, that a law such as that contained in the Priestly Code was taught by nature and practised as a custom by Israel before its details were prescribed by any authority,—a very different matter.

(1.) For the establishment of the first position reliance must be placed for the most part on the argument from silence, as it is called—*i.e.*, if the thing we are in search of is not mentioned, particularly if it is not mentioned where we should look for it, it is assumed that the thing did not exist. Wellhausen objects to the process followed by him being called by this name, and says, "What the opponents of Graf's hypothesis call its argument *ex silentio*, is nothing more or less than the universally valid method of historical investigation" (p. 365). One would think it depended not a little upon the manner and the extent to which the process is carried out; and it would be easy to illustrate the havoc that might be made in general history by a reliance upon this argument.[1] We have already in a former

[1] Whately, for example, in his 'Historic Doubts,' draws attention to the fact that the principal Parisian journal in 1814, on the very day on which the Allied armies entered Paris as conquerors, makes no mention of any such event. So, too, the battle of Poictiers in 732, which effectually checked the spread of Mohammedanism across Europe, is not once referred to in the monastic annals of the period. Again, Sir Thomas Browne lived through the civil wars and the Commonwealth; yet, says a biographer, "no syllable in any of his writings, notwithstanding their profound and penetrative meditations upon vicissitudes in human lives

chapter[1] observed the significant absence of all reference to education; and in regard to many other things, we are left in like ignorance by the Scriptural writers. Graphic as their descriptions are when they exist, there are hundreds of details of daily life and ordinary custom in regard to which we would fain have information. The prophet Isaiah, in one well-known passage,[2] gives a complete inventory of the wardrobe of a fashionable lady of Jerusalem; but a great number of the words he employs are found only in that passage, and are such that we can only guess at the precise things they are meant to signify. And to speak more particularly of customs and observances, who shall describe to us, from information drawn from the Biblical books, the mode in which the Sabbath was observed in the time of the prophets? We know from their references to it[3] that the Sabbath was specially sacred; and the book of the Covenant, at the latest, vouches for the existence of the Decalogue, which enjoins the sanctity of the Sabbath: yet we remain in almost total ignorance of the manner in which its sanctity was preserved. And the same thing holds of other feasts, whether we regard them as matters of custom or of prescription. Things of daily occurrence and of standing observance, just because they are such, are most naturally passed by without notice. It is perfectly evident that the Old Testament writers contemplated as their readers

and empires, betrays the least partisanship in the tragedy enacted on the world's great stage around him." And, once more, Sale notes that circumcision is held by the Mohammedans to be an ancient divine institution, the rite having been in use many years before Mohammed; and yet it is not so much as once mentioned in the Koran.

[1] Chap. iv. p. 75. [2] Isa. iii. 16-24.

[3] Amos viii. 5; Hosea ii. 11; Isa. i. 13: cf. 2 Kings iv. 23, xi. 5, 7, 9, xvi. 18.

those who were familiar with the most familiar things in their national life and history. As for Hebrew prophets not referring to legislative books, it is much more remarkable that they do not refer to prophetical books, and scarcely make a quotation from one another. I do not know that we have positive historical evidence (of a contemporary kind) that would establish the existence of the great bulk of the existing prophetic literature before the captivity; and quite recently a French critic[1] has put forth the view that the greater part of the literature of the Hebrews is a free creation of a school of theologians after the restoration.

A mode of reasoning like this can be tested by one striking instance, and such an instance is furnished in the great day of atonement (Levit. xvi.) A ceremonial so imposing, one would think, would not pass without notice, and the modern school points with confidence to the fact that though the institution bulks so largely in the Levitical Code, it is not once referred to in the pre-exilic history, and therefore it must have been devised first of all by Ezra or his successors. But the instance proves too much, for, as a matter of fact, there is no positive historical account of the observance till about the beginning of the Christian era, at the earliest the time of John Hyrcanus or even Herod the Great, 37 B.C., a date at which it was impossible that the prescription of the ceremony could have been inserted in the Law Code, which, according to Wellhausen, was introduced in B.C. 444.[2]

[1] Maurice Vernes, Les Résultats de l'Exégèse Biblique, Paris, 1890.

[2] Delitzsch, Pentateuch-Kritische Studien in Luthardt's Ztsch. f. Kirkl. Wissenschaft und Kirkl. Leben, 1880, p. 173 f.; Dillmann, Comm. on Lev., p. 525; Bredenkamp, Gesetz u. Propheten, p. 116. The fact that Ezekiel, in his [vision of] ritual, does not mention the day of atonement, is taken by the critics to prove that he was not aware of the legislation of the

But, indeed, we do not need to come so far down in history for evidence that the non-observance or the absence of mention of a law is not a proof of its non-existence. On the position of the modern critical writers, the Jehovistic book of the Covenant was in existence two centuries before Deuteronomy. And yet, not to speak of the moral precepts with which the Code is charged, and which were so sadly violated in the life of the people, can distinct proof be produced that the Sabbatic year prescribed in Exod. xxiii. 10, 11, or even the weekly Sabbath itself, was observed in the time during which this Code is said to have been the sole law-book? Why, the Deuteronomic law itself was systematically violated after the time of Josiah.[1] Down even in the times after the exile, among a community which had learned by misfortune the evil of breaking the law, and which had returned through hardship to set up a new state at Jerusalem, Ezra and Nehemiah had to contend for the observance of the most fundamental principles that lay not only at the basis of the Deuteronomic Code, but at the foundation of Israel's national existence.[2]

So far, then, as the first part of Wellhausen's thesis is concerned, it cannot be sustained. The argument from silence does not prove it, since we know that many things

Priestly Code in which it is prescribed. It is urged, however, in reply, that Ezekiel's idea of a double atonement for the sanctuary (Ezek. xlv. 18-20) may be an intensification of the atonement required in the Priestly Code. And Dillmann remarks, "Why Ezekiel should first have produced the idea of such an atonement is not at all apparent, still less how people of a later time ventured to hit upon quite different characteristics, and to give out these as Mosaic."

[1] Compare Deut. xv. 12 f. with Jer. xxxiv. 13 f.

[2] Compare Ezra ix. 1, 2, Neh. x. 30, xiii. 23, with Exod. xxxiv. 16, Deut. vii. 3. Compare also Neh. x. 31 with Deut. xv. 2; and Neh. x. 37, 39, with Deut. xii. 17.

of much greater significance to the prophets than ritual are not mentioned by them. The argument from non-observance does not prove it, since the Deuteronomic and Levitical Codes themselves were broken systematically after the admitted dates of their introduction. And the existence of the book of the Covenant, or even of such a part of it as would satisfy Wellhausen's own account of its origin, flatly disproves the assertion that up to the time of Deuteronomy the Israelites were in the position of people "having no law."

(2.) The other part of Wellhausen's motto that has to be established is, that Israel, without the law, did the works of the law; in other words, that the Codes were not suddenly introduced. On this subject, the use of the two terms, "praxis" and "programme," plays a prominent part in the discussions; and we can understand a code coming into existence by either process. The practice or usage of the time is systematised more or less, and put down in the form of prescription; this is the codification of praxis. Or, on the other hand, a person or persons, considering the existing state of matters unsatisfactory or insufficient, may devise a better scheme, and set it forth in orderly form as a legislative programme. It is remarkable how, on either hypothesis, the critical writers find it difficult to get rid of the postulate of Mosaic legislation, to which they have so much objection. For they tell us that the Deuteronomic Code was a programme drawn up by prophets and priests combined for the centralisation of worship, without which they saw there could be no purity of worship. It could not, on the hypothesis, have been a codification of the praxis, for the whole drift of the theory is, that up to the introduction of this Code, worship at any place was the practice. Yet the men who brought

about the introduction of this Code were the Mosaic party —the party who strove to preserve what they regarded as the true religion of Israel,—and they appealed to Mosaic authority in ascribing the Code to him. Wellhausen gives us to understand that the movement for centralisation was connected with the growth of monotheistic conceptions. In all this there is a testimony to the fact that Mosaism, in its essence, was monotheistic, and that the Deuteronomic Code rested on Mosaism at its best, to such an extent that the authority of Moses had to be invoked to secure its acceptance. Again, Ezekiel is said to have put forth a legislative programme; this, however, he did not ascribe to Moses, and his Code was not adopted. Was there any connection between the two things? In all this talk about programme, it seems to me the critical writers are in an uncomfortable dilemma. Either the programme is something new, and then their position that the law did not suddenly come into force becomes untenable; or else it is a departure in the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, which amounts to the Biblical view that what took place was a reformation of the worship, not an innovation.

The same perplexing situation arises when resort is had to praxis as an explanation of the origin of the Codes. This is particularly the case with the Priestly Code. We are told[1] that when the Temple was in ruins, and there was no longer a possibility of the worship being carried on, a body of men in the captivity set themselves to a careful study of the praxis as it had been carried on, and drew up what their memory had fondly preserved of the cultus, and that this assumed finally the form of the Priestly Code. The question at once occurs, What praxis? Was the worship of the Temple, as Ezekiel

[1] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, pp. 59 f., 404 f.

and others remembered it, of the pure Mosaic type prescribed in the Code which men of his spirit elaborated? What then becomes of Wellhausen's assertion that the observance of the Priestly Code was impossible in the conditions prevailing before the exile? What becomes also of all the burden of denunciation, of which the prophetic and historical books are full, of the corruptions that prevailed? But if the praxis was corrupt, what guided Ezekiel and Ezra to produce a Code which was in "the spirit of the Mosaic legislation"? Again we fall back upon the Mosaic legislation, which, unless we are to give the lie to all history, was something better than the corrupt practice.

Further, if the critics will have it that the Priestly Code is a codification of the praxis, we may employ their own argument, and ask them for historical proof of the praxis of anything that can be supposed to have formed the materials of the new Code. Wellhausen professes indeed to give what he calls "a sort of history of the ordinances of worship;" but he is constrained to add, "Rude and colourless that history must be confessed to be—a fault due to the materials, which hardly allow us to do more than mark the contrast between pre-exilic and post-exilic, and, in a secondary measure, that between Deuteronomic and pre-Deuteronomic."[1] Let us, for example, take the three great feasts of the Passover, Shebuoth or Weeks, and Tabernacles. These, as agricultural feasts, are admitted by the critics to date back to the time of the settlement in Canaan, though the distinctive religious or national character attributed to them by Biblical writers is disputed. Things of such regular recurrence could not be kept hid, and surely here the

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 13.

critical canon of observance may be applied. Yet we have already seen[1] the difficulty Wellhausen has in proving their existence; for in regard to the celebration of the feasts in question before the exile, we have only very few notices, and these mostly very slight. The observance of all the three is only mentioned twice, once in the most general terms in the book of Kings (1 Kings ix. 25), and again in the parallel passage in Chronicles (a book on which the critics are wont to place no confidence), where they are mentioned by their usual names (2 Chron. viii. 13). The celebration of the Passover is mentioned at most twice—viz., in a very general way, if it *is* this feast that is referred to, in Isa. xxx. 29, and again at the reformation in Josiah's reign (2 Kings xxiii. 21 ff.) Of the Feast of Tabernacles (Succoth) we have four notices—viz., two very doubtful ones in Judges xxi. 19 and 1 Sam. i. 20, 21 and another two very general references in 1 Kings viii. 2, xii. 32. The observance of the Feast of Weeks is only once mentioned, and that is in 2 Chron. viii. 13, where it is mentioned with the other two. The critics are in the habit of making light of the statement of the chronicler and the author of the book of Kings,[2] that such celebrations as took place in the times of Hezekiah and Josiah had not been seen since the times of the Judges, or in all the reigns of the Kings. This, they say, amounts simply to the fact that the Passover, as enjoined in the law, had not been observed at all till the late period to which the narrative refers.[3] But in view of the paucity of references, and the vagueness of the references which have

[1] See before, chap. xiv. p. 374.

[2] 2 Chron. xxx. 5, xxxv. 18, with 2 Kings xxiii. 22. Cf. Neh. viii. 17.

[3] One would have expected of the chronicler, if he was such a stickler for ceremonial, and so unscrupulous in his statements of their earlier ob-

been pointed out, we may ask, What then was observed at all? What proof have we that even the nature feasts were kept up, on which this new religious observance might be grafted? In the same way we could argue against the whole "praxis" of which so much is said. We have no more evidence of the existence of a praxis which could be subsequently codified than we have of the ordinances which are prescribed in the Codes; and the passages that may be supposed to refer to a cycle of nature feasts may as well be taken to refer to the legally sanctioned observances.

III. Modern critics, however, pronounce the Codes to be so incompatible on vital points as to give indication that they cannot have been all the production of one man, or the product of one age. On one subject, in particular, it is held they give clear evidence of a progress from the simple to the complex, of a development which required centuries to accomplish, and that subject is the legislation relating to the place of worship. It is maintained that the book of the Covenant permits sacrifice anywhere, or what amounts to that; that the Deuteronomic Code prescribes one central sanctuary; and that the Levitical Code makes no formal prescription on the subject, taking for granted that a central sanctuary exists, and that worship is there observed. These three stages of legislation, it is maintained, correspond to three periods in Israel's history. Up to the time of Josiah the worship of the Bamoth or high places, up and down the land, at the holy places consecrated by hallowed associations, was the rule and custom. Then came the struggle which culminated in the victory

servance as the critics make him out to be, that he would have rather pointedly told us how faithfully the Passover had been observed all along, than give this intimation that it had been persistently neglected.

in Josiah's time, when the high places were abolished, and the legitimate worship confined to the Temple. And finally, after the Temple was no more, and the people in exile had time to reflect on the privileges they had lost, the work of gathering up the ritual praxis that had been observed at Jerusalem was undertaken; and when the restored community returned to their native land, they came with a book in their hand regulating the service of the new sanctuary, the book being the Levitical Code.

It will be observed that the great difference on this view lies between the book of the Covenant and the Deuteronomic Code; and as the primary object of our inquiry is the earlier condition of things, the pre-prophetic and early prophetic religion, this part of the subject demands more attention. The difference between the two Codes in question is not one that resolves itself easily into a case of development, for the introduction of the Deuteronomic Code is represented as having been effected in fact by a religious revolution. A true case of development would be that centralisation of worship was the idea and the ideal from the first, but that it gained realisation by slow degrees. If this can be made out by a comparison of the Codes, and can be shown to be borne out by the history, the objection of modern critics to the discrepancy of the Codes will have comparatively little weight; and a development of the proper kind, from germ to full manifestation, will be established. It will then not necessarily follow that the Codes are far distant in time; or if, in their final form, they belong to periods far apart, yet they will be seen in the essential point to agree, and the stronger emphasis laid by the Deuteronomic Code than by the book of the Covenant on this requirement, will be explicable on the greater fulness of the longer Code, on the special object

which it aimed at, or even on the supposition of a later editing or revision of it. I think good reasons can be given for taking this position:—

(1.) No formal sanction is given by prophetic men before Josiah's time to a multiplicity of sanctuaries in the sense in which the modern writers speak. When Amos and Hosea speak of the worship performed at such places as Bethel and Gilgal, there is nothing in their words to lead us to suppose that these places were regarded by them as set apart by any divine authority as places of worship. They were certainly invested with old sacred associations (every country has such places); they were certainly, in the time of these prophets, resorted to for religious purposes by the people generally, but the prophets mention them for the purpose of rebuking the idolatrous or corrupt religious observances of which they were the seat, and never are such expressions applied to them as to Jerusalem and Zion. It is quite possible that, in the northern kingdom after the schism, such places as these, hallowed by patriarchal associations, were the only places, or the special places, at which those who wished to sacrifice to Jahaveh, debarred from attendance at Jerusalem, performed their worship. But as the prophets recognised only the Davidic house as the legitimate depository of the monarchy, so they regarded Jerusalem as the seat of Jahaveh, and the place of His special manifestation. The very first words which Amos utters to the people of the northern kingdom are: "Jahaveh shall roar from Zion, and utter His voice from Jerusalem;"[1] words which could only mean that from Zion and Jerusalem God's authority was in a special way manifested; that there, by pre-eminence, His presence was to be sought and His law

[1] See Note XXVII.

to be found, just as the oracle said, "Out of Zion shall go forth the law" (Isa. ii. 2; Micah iv. 2). Whatever may be said of sanctuaries in the northern kingdom, there is no sanction given to such places as of co-ordinate authority with Jerusalem. Much less is there any trace of the recognition of any number of places in the southern kingdom, as some would have us suppose, which were regarded as equally sacred with Jerusalem.

(2.) Nor does the history prove that a multiplicity of sanctuaries, in the modern sense, was a recognised thing in the nation. When it is said that in the stories of the patriarchs the writers represent the fathers of the nation as freely erecting an altar wherever they encamped, and that therefore the writer of these stories saw nothing wrong in this proceeding, there is surely a confusion of thought, or a false inference, when it is concluded that in the writers' day a multiplicity of sanctuaries was recognised. For how, indeed, could the patriarchs have sacrificed at all, except in the manner indicated? There was to them no law of central sanctuary, and the writer of these accounts simply represents the patriarchs as doing the only thing that it was possible for them to do. If the writer knew of the law of a central sanctuary, he could not have blamed the patriarchs for ignoring it, simply because it did not exist in their day. Of course the contention is that the writer knew nothing at all about the worship of Abraham and the other patriarchs, but simply *projected* into the past the ideas and practices of his own time, and made them do sacrifice at the various places which in the writer's day were resorted to as sanctuaries. But all this is mere assumption. The cases referred to of Samuel and the Judges, who are described as offering sacrifices at various places, are not more conclusive on the point in

hand. The places at which such sacrifices are offered are not regarded by the writers as places sacred in themselves; nay, they are mentioned generally only on the special occasions on which sacrifice was performed at them, and again disappear from the history. There is always some special reason for the performance of the sacrifice; there is not one of them that is spoken of as habitually the seat of worship, except Shiloh, which was consecrated by the presence of the ark, and which was, so long as it stood, the central sanctuary of Israel. That it was so regarded as the predecessor of Jerusalem itself is proved by the reference to it so late as the time of Jeremiah (vii. 12), a reference which shows that the nation had regarded it as, for its time, similar to the sanctuary at Jerusalem in the days of its glory.

(3.) Moreover, the ideal even in the book of the Covenant is that of a central sanctuary. Much has been made here of the words, "In every place where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee" (Exod. xx. 24), which have been taken to mean a permission to worship indifferently at any place. Wellhausen indeed makes a show of meeting the limitation expressed in the words "where I record my name"; but all he can say[1] in explanation of them is, "that the spots where intercourse between earth and heaven took place were not willingly regarded as arbitrarily chosen, but, on the contrary, were considered as having been somehow or other selected by the Deity Himself for His service," which is simply saying nothing. The promise here given must be taken to mean something of a positive kind, and coming after the direction how to make the altar, must be supposed to have some reference to worship. If, after the manner of

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 30.

modern critics, we were to ask the *polemic* the words imply, it might almost seem, on their mode of reasoning, that the writer of these words was protesting against such a centralising of worship as took place in Josiah's days![1] At all events, it seems strange that such a permission to worship anywhere should be given in this formal way at a time when, it is alleged, no one dreamed of doing anything else, for the book of the Covenant dates (on the hypothesis) from the earliest writing period, when the law of a central sanctuary was unknown.[2] If the words were meant merely to sanction places which had been elevated into sacredness by association with patriarchal theophanies and the like, they might be urged as an argument for the worship at a certain number of places; but this is less than what the words express, and less than the example of the patriarchs would warrant, for they seem to have erected an altar as a matter of course wherever they went.[3] And if the words are really intended to mean that Jahaveh may be worshipped anywhere, in the sense that "a multiplicity of altars was assumed as a matter of course,"[4] it may be objected that this is hardly consistent with the materialistic conception of the national God which is ascribed to Israel. One would have expected

[1] I see that Wellhausen notes that "Exod. xx. 24-26 looks almost like a protest against the arrangements of the Temple of Solomon, especially v. 26."—Hist. of Israel, p. 96, footnote.

[2] So that we have here something very like "a positive statement of the non-existence of what had not yet come into being," which Wellhausen thinks it so unreasonable to ask.—Hist. of Israel, p. 365.

[3] Wellhausen, however, says that they did not worship at indifferent and casual localities, but at famous and immemorially holy places of worship; which is just assuming his hypothesis.—Hist. of Israel, p. 30. This is also the view Stade takes, connecting these sites with the worship of ancestors.

[4] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 29.

that, at a period when Jahaveh was no more than a national God, as the theory maintains, the tendency would be to a narrow centralising of worship, or at least to a worship in regularly authorised places; and that, when once "ethic monotheism" was reached, a free and more unrestricted worship would be permissible. But this is another of the many perplexities of the modern theory, that the development was quite the other way.

As it stands, the book of the Covenant is represented as antecedent to the appointment of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and may therefore be taken as meant to state the fundamental idea of worship that was inculcated upon Israel. As the Covenant precedes the law and is not annulled by it (Gal. iii. 17), this more spiritual conception of God, as ever near to the worshipper who seeks Him in the right way, represents the idea that we find everywhere held by prophetic men. It was a protest, or polemic, if we may so say, against the localising tendencies of other religions, an assurance that the God of Israel could and would come near to bless His people in every place where He recorded His name. It thus formed the guiding principle of prophetic men, to whom, as it would seem, the ordinances of ritual worship were "a figure for the time present," and who never allowed themselves to fall into the belief that their God was confined to temples made with hands. Had there not been such an assertion of this fundamental principle in the very earliest legislation—the omnipresence of Jahaveh—we should no doubt have been told by modern critics that this is another proof that at this early stage of religious belief He was conceived of as limited to some high mountain, or accessible only in some special sanctuary. The duty of united worship in a central place is not incom-

patible with God's power to bless anywhere. The book of Deuteronomy itself, which is said to restrict worship to the Temple of Jerusalem, contains an injunction to set up an altar and offer sacrifices between Ebal and Gerizim (Deut. xi. 29; xxvii. 4, 13). Still the limitation stands, "in every place where I record my name," which cannot simply mean "in all places indifferently." There was to be some indication of Jahaveh's name given by Himself; and after all, the old explanation that saw a reference to the movements of the tribes through the wilderness, under the direction of God, who appointed their halting-places, and to a time before the tribes were a settled people with fixed dwelling-place, though it does not seem to exhaust the reference, is not inappropriate. At most the words may imply the acceptable worship of Jahaveh at a number of successive places, but they do not necessarily, nor perhaps possibly, imply the recognition of simultaneous sanctuaries in different places. With this idea the whole tone of the passage is at variance. The people to whom the words are addressed are *one* people; it is not to *individuals* that the permission or promise is given.[1] Wherever Israel as a whole is, and wherever Jahaveh, their *one* God, records His name, there acceptable worship may be offered. The

[1] The ten commandments, says a very docile pupil of Wellhausen, "are not addressed to individuals, but to a nation. The 'thou' to whom they speak is the people of Israel, and they are prefaced by a sentence in which Jehovah states how it is His right to give laws to Israel" (Allan Menzies, National Religion, p. 42). Wellhausen would have us believe that the notion of the "congregation" as a sacred body was "foreign to Hebrew antiquity, but runs through the Priestly Code from beginning to end" (Hist. of Israel, p. 78). I think we have it here clearly marked in the "thou" of the book of the Covenant in formal connection with worship (comp. above, p. 303 f.) But indeed it was present in essence in the first self-consciousness of Israel as Jahaveh's people.

very idea of the unity of the national God, and the correlative idea of the unity of His people, imply a unity of worship and of sanctuary. The corporate reference is confirmed by the fact that this same book of the Covenant ordains that three times in the year all the males should appear before Jahaveh. It is inconsistent with the fundamental ideas of the unity of the tribes at that early time to suppose that such a command could mean that three times in the year all males were to make a pilgrimage to some shrine or other, some tomb or holy place of a tribal ancestor, and thus fulfil the command here given. The mere possession of a sacred ark, with a tent for its habitation, and these as the common possession of all the tribes, was in itself a centralising of worship. Though the existence of a tabernacle such as is described in the Pentateuch is denied by the modern historians, it is not denied that an ark, and a tent for its covering, were in the possession of Israel, and held in general regard in connection with the Jahaveh religion. Nor can it be denied that Shiloh was a sanctuary of a quite special importance in the times of the Judges and Samuel, and no one who believes that the Hebrew writers knew anything at all of their history will accept the assumption that the Temple was merely the court sanctuary of the kingdom of Judah, or even only one of many coordinate holy places in that kingdom. Wellhausen says[1] that the principle "one God, one sanctuary" is the idea of the Priestly Code. It is, in point of fact, the idea of the book of the Covenant also, though neither in the one nor in the other is it held to mean that the one God was only present, and could only manifest His power at one particular spot. "*An* altar shalt thou make to me," the

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 34.

command runs, not "altars." The altar of God is always only one. It ceases to be an altar the moment His people and His manifestation to them are at another place. It is not the sanctity of the place that constitutes the sanctity of the altar, but the presence of Him who makes His name manifest. It is remarkable that we do not find in all the Old Testament such a divine utterance as "my altars"; and only twice does the expression "Thy altars," addressed to God, occur. It is found in Elijah's complaint, which refers to northern Israel, at a time when the legitimate worship of Jerusalem was excluded; and in Psalm lxxxiv., where it again occurs, no inference can be drawn from it. On the other hand, Hosea says distinctly, "Ephraim hath multiplied altars to sin" (Hosea viii. 11).

I think, therefore, it is not proved that the book of the Covenant allows worship at any indefinite number of places as co-ordinate sanctuaries; nor does the history show that this was recognised by the religious leaders of the nation. Previous to the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, and especially when the ark was removed from Shiloh, we find what may be called a freer or less regulated practice; and this was the result of the exigencies of the period. But from the erection of the Temple, not only is there no proof that any other sanctuary was allowed, but there are positive indications that that was regarded as the one authoritative place of worship in the sense in which we here speak. The practice in the northern kingdom proves nothing, for all the assertions of modern writers to the effect that the history mainly evolved itself there, and that the kingdom of Judah counts for little, are opposed to the spirit and distinct utterances of the earliest prophets. Not less are they inconsistent with the earliest legislation. The book

of the Covenant, at whatever time written, and whether composed in the northern or the southern kingdom, makes no distinction between the two, and lays down one law for all Israel. The schism of the ten tribes was a breaking away from national unity and from the national God; and no proof can be adduced that prophetic men looked with anything but disfavour on the idolatrous worship that was practised in the southern kingdom, whether at Jerusalem or at local sanctuaries.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LAW-BOOKS.

Distinction of Books and Codes—Wellhausen's personal experience—The hypotheses of Graf; not the result of criticism—The great objection to it its assumption of the fictitious character of the history, thus leaving no solid materials for a credible history—I. The book of Deuteronomy is neither (1) *pseudonymous nor* (2) *fictitious—II. The books containing the Levitical Code*—(1) *The position that Ezekiel paved the way for this Code*—(2) *The pious remnant and the reformation ideas*—(3) *Fictitious history in an aggravated form*—(4) *The literary form of this Code—Multiplicity of sources a proof of long-continued literary activity—But the main course of the history rests on its own independent proofs.*

In the preceding chapters we have seen reasons for concluding that the modern theory does not sufficiently account for the persistent ascription of law and religious ordinance to Moses; that it fails to exhibit the transition from natural to religious observance, and from oral to authoritative written law; that its argument from silence tells as much against its own assumption as against the Biblical view; and that its sharp distinction of the Codes in essential matters is not well founded. With the literary fates of the various law-codes we are not much concerned, because this is a subject on which the Biblical theory, which it is our main purpose to test, leaves great

latitude for different views; and the same may be said of the question of the composition of books. We must, however, look somewhat particularly into the relation of the law-books to the Codes and to the general history; for in regard to this matter the Biblical theory and the modern are radically at variance in important points.

Wellhausen in one passage[1] gives us an interesting piece of his own personal experience. He tells us that in his early student days he "was attracted by the stories of Saul and David, Ahab and Elijah;" that the discourses of Amos and Isaiah laid strong hold on him, and that he read himself well into the prophetic and historical books of the Old Testament; but that all the time he "was troubled with a bad conscience, as if he were beginning with the roof instead of the foundation." At last he took courage, and made his way through the books of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers; but looked in vain for the light which he expected these would shed on the historical and prophetical books. "At last," he says, "in the course of a casual visit in Göttingen in the summer of 1867, I learned through Ritschl that Karl Heinrich Graf placed the law later than the prophets, and, almost without knowing his reasons for the hypothesis, I was prepared to accept it; I readily acknowledged to myself the possibility of understanding Hebrew antiquity without the book of the Torah."

So far as his experience in the reading of Scripture goes, there is nothing very peculiar in it. I suppose that few of those who have formed for themselves any defined view of Bible history, have acquired this by reading through the law-books before approaching those that are historical. He tells us nothing of his experience in re-

[1] Hist. of Israel, pp. 3, 4.

gard to the book of Genesis, whose stories of the patriarchs, one would have thought, would have as powerfully attracted the young student as the history of Saul and David; and it is difficult to fancy what idea he could have obtained of even the historical and prophetical books, without accepting the underlying assumption of these books that the history went back to the patriarchal period. The whole history hangs in the air, if we begin with Saul and David—implying, as it does, a great deal for which we must turn to the writings which Wellhausen must include in his expression, "the book of the Torah." But in using this expression, and in his reference to the theory of Graf which he says he found himself ready to accept, he leads the unwary reader to confuse two things which ought to be kept distinct, and to jump to a conclusion which is not warranted by the experience which he relates.

Our examination of the early prophetical writings, and of the histories which are said to be of about the same date, always threw us back upon an antecedent history, and gave at least a strong presumption of the truth of the narrative contained in the books of the Pentateuch. Yet for the fundamental facts and main course of the history we did not require to refer to the Pentateuchal laws, although we found a coherence and consistency between the accounts contained in the two sets of books. The history, in fact, does not turn upon laws and the observance of ceremonies, and so far it is true, as Wellhausen says he experienced it, that the history is intelligible without the Torah. But in saying "the book of the Torah," if by that he means the whole Pentateuch, and not merely the legal part of it, it is not the case that the history is thus intelligible.

The law-books of the Pentateuch, as is well known, exhibit two component elements,—narrative and legislation; and it has been found impossible by literary analysis to separate them. Whether the two parts originally came from different hands or not, in part or in whole, they are so inextricably blended or woven together that it has to be confessed they must go together. That is to say, the narratives imply that the laws were given under historical circumstances, and the laws imply the circumstances under which they were given. If, then, we are satisfied with the testimony given by later writers to the history; if, in other words, we take the references to earlier times contained in the writings of the eighth and ninth centuries as confirming, in the main, the narrative of the Pentateuch, we might conclude that the laws, which are by confession bound so closely in the bundle of narrative as to be inseparable from it, are also the laws and statutes to which the prophets appeal. The laws would go with the narrative, in which they are enclosed. And this is what the Old Testament writers take for granted. The reverse process, however, since the time of Graf, has been followed by those who advocate his theory. They say the narratives must follow the laws. How this conclusion was reached, and what it involves, must now be considered.

Graf at first attempted to make a separation between the legislation and the accompanying history contained in the Pentateuch; and having proved to his own satisfaction that the narratives attached to the Levitical Code were implied in the book of Deuteronomy, and known to the writer of the latter, he said that the narratives were early, while the legislation was late. Being, however, afterwards convinced that the two elements were inseparable, he was clearly in a dilemma, from which he adopted a remarkable

mode of escape. He simply said that as the laws had been proved to be of late origin, the narratives must also be of late composition—throwing over entirely the proofs which he had before considered sufficient to show that the narratives of the Levitical books were older than Deuteronomy, and introducing a fashion of regarding the contents of these books which is at once novel and startling. For if the laws of the Levitical Code are late in the literal sense that they became laws at a period as late as Ezra, the narratives which accompany them and describe in detail in regard to many of them the manner in which they were promulgated by Moses, cannot be true history at all: the events related as the historical setting of the laws must be nothing else than fictitious. The only thing that can be said in their favour is, that they were invented for the good purpose of confirming and sanctioning the laws, by ascribing them to Moses, to whom the national tradition looked back as the great originator of law in Israel.

The first thing that strikes one here is that the theory is not the result of a sustained and uniform line of criticism. It was a *volte-face*. Graf had satisfied himself that the narrative parts of the Pentateuch were early, and were referred to or implied in pre-exilian writings. If he was equally satisfied that the laws were exilic, or post-exilic, and yet were inseparable from the narrative, the proper conclusion was that his critical processes were incorrect somewhere, and he ought to have searched for the error. One would think that the national testimony to a series of historical facts would be more clear than the recollection of a body of laws, and that laws were more liable to change by usage than the national testimony to vary in regard to fundamental facts of history. At all events, to say bluntly

that the narratives must go with the laws is no more a process of criticism than to say that the laws must go with the history. It is therefore inaccurate to describe the position of Graf as a conclusion of criticism. It was simply a hypothesis to evade a difficulty in which criticism had landed him.

And then, when it is considered what is implied in the position that the narratives must go with the laws, it cannot but be admitted that the hypothesis is so far-reaching and revolutionary that it should be accepted only when every other explanation of the phenomena fails. For it amounts to a thorough discrediting of the historical value of the narratives of these books with which the laws are so closely interwoven; and to an ascription of fiction, if not fraud, to the writers, which will render it extremely difficult for sober criticism to rely upon any testimony which is borne by the Hebrew writers to the facts of their national history. So that here again, when pushed home to its central position, we find that the modern view, claiming to be strictly critical, in reality throws discredit on the documents which it starts to criticise,[1] and which are the only sources available for obtaining information regarding the history which is to be described.

But there is no necessity, except that imposed by an unyielding hypothesis, for this last resource. If laws were not given by Moses, then certainly any narratives that describe them as so given must be false. But if Moses did deliver a body of laws to his people, then even if the laws, as they stand, indicate divergency, even if they underwent modification, even if the codes or the books, or both, are of much later composition, in their existing forms, than the time of Moses, we may still respect

[1] Compare above, chap. vi. p. 149 f.

the *bona fides* of the writers of the books, and maintain them as substantially true history.

I. To begin with the book of Deuteronomy. Some who believe that this book is of late date, written at the time of Josiah in order to bring about a reformation, and yet seek to maintain the *bona fides* of the writer, are in the habit of saying that the book is an example of pseudonymous composition. Briggs, for example,[1] has argued at length and ingeniously to show that there is nothing unreasonable in the supposition of pseudonymous literature in the Bible, and by reference to the book of Ecclesiastes has tried to save this book of Deuteronomy from the category of forgery or fiction. But in point of fact, the book is not pseudonymous in the same way that Ecclesiastes is. The latter book, except the heading at the beginning and the epilogue (chap. xii. 9 ff.) at the end, is all written in one person. "I, the preacher," did so and so throughout; and his personality, "son of David," and magnificence, are so accentuated as to lead to the conclusion that Solomon is meant. But the writer by saying, "was king over Israel in Jerusalem," lets us at the outset into his secret, which is simply this, that he is writing in the name of Solomon, to represent what might have been Solomon's reflections upon life. There is not only no intent to deceive, but there is scarcely the possibility of deception. The circumstances of a historical

[1] Biblical Study (1887), p. 223 ff. He appeals also, among others, to Robertson Smith, "who uses the term legal fiction as a variety of literary fiction" (see Old Testament in the Jewish Church, p. 385). What is there described, however, as "found more convenient to present the new law in a form which enables it to be treated as an integral part of the old legislation," though probably applicable to the present form in which the collections of laws appear, does not seem to cover the case of the *book* of Deuteronomy with which we are concerned. Compare Cheyne, Jeremiah, His Life and Times, p. 77.

kind that are introduced are so few and so general that we are not misled or misinformed as to matters of fact; all the rest is meditation, moralising, and the scheme of the book is so far transparent. But it is quite different with the book of Deuteronomy. As a book, it does not profess to be written by Moses; it is, in fact, one of the many anonymous books of the Old Testament. The writer, whoever he was, and at whatever time he lived, tells us certain things that Moses did, and especially produces long addresses which Moses is said to have uttered. These long speeches, however, are all set in a historical framework; and if the framework is not historical, the book is more than pseudonymous—it is pseudo-historical. The speeches by themselves might be taken to fall into the category of the book of Ecclesiastes, where the preacher is made to give the thoughts that passed through his mind. But if the writer, who has set these speeches down at definite times and under definite circumstances, is not correct as to the time and circumstances, or if the events he weaves into the speeches never occurred, he is manufacturing these, not studying to reproduce them by historical imagination. The book declares that at a certain time, and under certain circumstances, Moses gathered the people and addressed to them long speeches recalling certain facts. If Moses never did such a thing, and if such facts never occurred, the book must be simply described as unhistorical or fictitious.

And yet I do not think it is to be so regarded. Whoever was the author, and whatever time may be assigned for its composition, this is what the book presents to us. It declares that Moses at the close of the wilderness journey, when the people were ready to cross the Jordan, made formal addresses to them, in which he recounted

the events of their past history, recapitulated the laws which he had laid down for their guidance, and warned them against the temptations to which they would be particularly exposed in Canaan; threatening them, in case of disobedience, with God's judgments, and promising them, in case of obedience, His blessing. Now, if Moses sustained anything at all like the office which is invariably ascribed to him in the books of the Old Testament; if he was the leader of the people to the borders of Canaan, the founder of their national constitution, the lawgiver in any positive and definite sense,—it was the most natural thing in the world that he should, at the close of his life, have given such parting counsels and addresses to the people whose history was so closely bound up with his own life's work. That is to say, the situation which the book of Deuteronomy presents to us is a situation not in itself improbable, but on every ground exceedingly probable; and the statement by the writer of the book that this situation presented itself is such that it would be accepted as matter of fact in any secular historian. Further, if a writer, whether early or late, set himself to tell all this, he could only do so in the form in which the book of Deuteronomy comes before us.

Let us not be misled by the direct form in which these speeches are expressed. Wellhausen, in one place,[1] speaks contemptuously of our being treated to long addresses instead of historical details. It is somewhat remarkable that he, and many like-minded, have not taken note of the peculiarity of the Hebrew language, that it has not developed what we call the indirect speech — a peculiarity which necessitates the regular introduction of speeches or addresses. Take such a passage as the

[1] History of Israel, p. 340.

following: When the children of Israel, after their long wanderings in the desert, were on the point of crossing the Jordan to take possession of the land to which they had looked forward as their inheritance, Moses, who had been their constant guide and legislator for forty years, seeing that the close of his life was near, and solicitous for the welfare of the people whom he had hitherto guided, assembled them about him, and in various addresses recapitulated the striking events of their past history, dwelling particularly on details that exhibited most clearly the guiding hand of God and the fallibility and frailty of Israel, restated the fundamental principles on which the nation was constituted, and by warning and promise directed them to the dangers that lay in the future if they proved unfaithful, and to the blessings in store for them if they adhered to allegiance to their national God. Let any professor of Hebrew set himself to state in idiomatic Hebrew what all this implies in detail, and he will be bound to state it just as it is put down in this book. The absence of the indirect speech in Hebrew can be made quite clear to the English reader by a reference to any page of the historical books. If a writer wishes to say that one person made a verbal communication to another, he must say, "So-and-so spake to So-and-so, saying," and must give the *ipsissima verba.* And yet, strictly speaking, the writer is not to be taken as vouching for the actual words spoken. He is simply producing, in the only way that the laws of his language allow him to produce, the substance of the thing said; and from beginning to end of the Old Testament writings, the language remained at that stage, only the faintest attempts to pass beyond it being visible. It is part of that direct, graphic style of Old Testament Scripture,

which is of wide extent, and is based on the intuitive, presentative mode of thought of the sacred writers, who must describe a scene by painting it and its actors, with their words and gestures, and reproduce a communication in the actual words supposed to have been uttered.[1]

It is easy to see now how a writer, soon after or long after Moses, recalling the events which we may suppose tradition preserved in the nation's mind, and using we know not what documents, produced a book like Deuteronomy. The situation was not one of active events, but of reflective pause and consideration, preparatory to the arduous work of the contest, and hence the literary form of the book is different from that of the other books of the Pentateuch. Not by any fiction, not by inventing a story for a purpose, but in perfect good faith, he represents the aged lawgiver, surrounded by the people whose welfare lay so much at his heart, giving them such counsel, warning, and encouragement as were suited to their circumstances. It was but natural that a writer, setting himself to such a task, should mingle much of his own in the composition. No writer can divest himself of his own personality, or write entirely without reference to the time in which he lives. And a writer succeeding Moses, at a greater or less interval, could not but see the development of events which were only in germ in Moses' time, and could not help representing them more or less in their developed form. In this sense, and to this extent, it is true that any late writer writes under the influence of later ideas; and the objection taken by critical writers to such a course is an objection that would apply to all writing of history.

[1] I may be allowed in this connection to refer to a paper on the "Graphic Element in the Old Testament" in the Expositor, second series, vol. vi. p. 241 ff.

But between this—which is done in absolute good faith—and the wholesale manufacturing of incidents and situations, there is all the difference between history and fiction. We cannot think of such a writer imagining his events so as to represent Moses recapitulating a series of occurrences that did not take place, or which the writer did not firmly believe did take place, or ascribing to him laws which he did not consider to have been in their form or substance propounded to the people whom Moses addressed.

Laws are indeed, as has been already said, subject to change with changing circumstances, and observances are liable to assume new phases to meet new emergencies. A law, given at first with a general reference, may come face to face with actual states of society which force it to take a more definite shape to meet the cases that have arisen. This is development of law, but it is not change of the substance of the law. Now if, as is surely most reasonable to assume, Moses did warn his people against the idolatries of the nations of Canaan, and enjoin them to maintain their own religious faith and observances, the force of such warnings and admonitions would be accentuated when the actual dangers emerged; the law would be seen in its farther reference, and assume a more specific and precise form in the minds of those who looked at it. If, then, a later writer, believing in all good faith that Moses gave such admonitions, had before his eyes the actual dangers which the lawgiver had in a general way foreseen, he could not help, in restating the laws, giving them a sharper and more incisive point; but he was not thereby either changing or inventing a law. This would be to develop law in the spirit of the Mosaic legislation, on the understanding, however, that there was

a positive Mosaic legislation to be developed. And all this again, it seems to me, is compatible with the good faith of the writer and with the substantial historical accuracy of his narrative. It is, however, quite a different thing from the supposition that the writer, after he had seen certain dangers and abuses emerge, set himself to devise a law which was quite new, in order to meet these, and deliberately contrived a whole set of historical occurrences, in which it was feigned that the laws were given forth in Mosaic times.

It will be remembered that those who make the Code of Deuteronomy late, usually say that the writer drew up laws in *the spirit* of the Mosaic legislation; and even Wellhausen says that the book of "Deuteronomy presupposes earlier attempts of this kind, and borrows its materials largely from them."[1] The Biblical account of the matter is, that Moses actually wrote down the laws contained in the book. There was, in other words, a Deuteronomic Code prior to the book of Deuteronomy; this is what the critics themselves say, and what the book itself says. The question is, Did the Code, in a written form and to an appreciable extent, come from Moses himself? On the one side we have these vague admissions as to the "spirit of the Mosaic legislation" (and how was a late writer to know what that spirit was unless by positive enactment?), and the equally vague admission of "former attempts," without positive specification of the time and extent of the attempts that were made. On the other hand, we have the positive statement that Moses, at his death, left a body of laws such as are included in the book of Deuteronomy. That we have the very words of the laws as he penned them, the custom of literary com-

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 402. See above, p. 399 f.

position, and the ordinary fates of legislative codes, show us we are not forced to suppose. What became of the actual collection of laws, beyond the fact that it was delivered to the Levites, and deposited in the side of the ark,[1] we are not told. And moreover, at what time and by whose hands the whole of the book of Deuteronomy, as we now have it, was composed, is a matter which literary criticism alone cannot decide. It is only by inferences, not very clear in themselves, that the conclusion is reached that the book belongs to the age of Josiah; but even if, as a book, it belongs to that age, or later, I think the considerations advanced will show how it may be still historical and trustworthy, exhibiting at once the working of a later development of old principles, and preserving also—not inventing for the occasion—elements which are ancient and Mosaic.[2]

II. Of the other law-books, we have to deal particularly with those that embody the Levitical Code. Here the narrative and the legal elements are very closely blended; but I think it is possible, even on the supposition that the Code underwent modification in course of time, to accept the books as trustworthy historical records. Let us, however, first of all, see how the critical writers account for the introduction of the Code and its related narratives.

It is said that Ezekiel

"in the last part of his work made the first attempt to record the ritual which had been customary in the Temple of Jerusalem. Other priests attached themselves to him (Levit. xvii.-xxvi.), and thus there grew up in the exile from among the members of this profession a kind of school of people who reduced to writing and to a system what they had formerly practised in the way of their calling. After

[1] Deut. xxxi. 26.

[2] See Note XXVIII.

the Temple was restored this theoretical zeal still continued to work, and the ritual when renewed was still further developed by the action and reaction on each other of theory and practice."[1] "So long as the sacrificial worship remained in actual use, it was zealously carried on, but people did not concern themselves with it theoretically, and had not the least occasion for reducing it to a Code. But once the Temple was in ruins, the cultus at an end, its *personnel* out of employment, it is easy to understand how the sacred praxis should have become a matter of theory and writing, so that it might not altogether perish, and how an exiled priest should have begun to paint the picture of it as he carried it in his memory, and to publish it as a programme for the future restoration of the theocracy. Nor is there any difficulty if arrangements, which as long as they were actually in force were simply regarded as natural, were seen after their abolition in a transfiguring light, and from the study devoted to them gained artificially a still higher value."[2]

All this may not be so "easy to understand" to everybody as it seems to be to Wellhausen. Indeed the things that he finds "no difficulty" in accepting are very often the very things for which proof is most desiderated. As to codification being the deposit during the exile of an old, fully developed praxis, we have already had something to say (p. 400 f.); and Bredenkamp exclaims with justifiable astonishment, "Clouds which are formed in the time of grandsires are not in the habit of raining upon grandsons. Could people not write in pre-exilic times? Must they not be allowed to write? Why tear with violence the pen from the hand of the ancient Israelitish priests?"[3] We are told indeed by Wellhausen, on his own authority, that the praxis of the priests at the altar never formed part of the written law in pre-exilic times.[4] But Dillmann, who has subjected these books to a most thorough examination, not only sees nothing against the idea, but

[1] Well., Hist. of Israel, p. 404; comp. 496.
[2] Ibid., p. 59 f.
[3] Gesetz und Propheten, p. 118.
[4] Hist. of Israel, p. 59.

finds positive proof for it, that the priests at the Temple of Jerusalem were in the habit of writing down the laws and regulations for their ceremonial functions.[1] Besides, Wellhausen has to assume for the nonce that the praxis which was "zealously carried on" anterior to the exile was just what underwent codification after it; although his general contention is that in the pre-exilic period "no trace can be found of acquaintance with the Priestly Code, but on the other hand, very clear indications of ignorance of its contents."[2] If, however, such "ignorance of its *contents*" prevailed, how was an exiled priest or a number of priests to carry the whole thing in memory and reduce it to writing? Moreover, what he ascribes to the time of the exile, seems ill to agree with the statement of the matter which he gives in another place. The Babylonian exile, he says,

"violently tore the nation away from its native soil and kept it apart for half a century,—a breach of historical continuity than which it is almost impossible to conceive a greater. The new generation had no natural but only an artificial relation to the times of old; the firmly rooted growths of the old soil, regarded as thorns by the pious, were extirpated, and the freshly ploughed fallows ready for a new sowing."[3]

He then goes on to say that it is

"far from being the case that the whole people at that time underwent a general conversion in the sense of the prophets. . . . Only the pious ones, who with trembling followed Jehovah's word, were left as a remnant; they alone had the strength to maintain the Jewish individuality amid the medley of nationalities into which they had been thrown. From the exile there returned, not the nation, but a religious sect—those, namely, who had given them-

[1] Die Bücher Exodus u. Leviticus, 2te Auflage, p. 386. He calls Wellhausen's position "an arbitrary assertion."

[2] Hist. of Israel, p. 59. Comp. above, p. 394.

[3] Ibid., p. 28.

selves up body and soul to the reformation ideas. It is no wonder that to these people, who besides, on their return, all settled in the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, the thought never once occurred of restoring the local cults. It cost them no struggle to allow the destroyed Bamoth to continue lying in ruins; the principle had become part of their very being, that the one God had also but one place of worship, and thenceforward for all time coming this was regarded as a thing of course."

This aspect of the exile as a violent wrench from old associations is hardly consistent with the view that a priestly party from the very beginning of the captivity took up the minute study and arrangement of the sacrificial system which had just been broken up. Nor, although it is "no wonder" to Wellhausen, is it very clear that a people should so easily forget all that was bad in the past worship (and how much of it was bad!) and so readily begin life anew on an entirely new principle. Indeed this whole account of the influence of the exile on the codification of law does not by any means turn out to be so easy as Wellhausen would make us believe.

(1.) In the first place, we are told that "the transition from the pre-exilic to the post-exilic period is effected, not by Deuteronomy, but by Ezekiel the priest in prophet's mantle, who was one of the first to be carried into exile."[1] Ezekiel's so-called programme is so confidently appealed to as the precursor of the Levitical Code, that to assert anything to the contrary at the present day is to expose one's self to ridicule as incompetent to understand critical processes. Nay, so important are the chapters in the book of Ezekiel which contain this programme, that Wellhausen says they have been called, not incorrectly, "the key of the Old Testament."[2] The chapters in question are xl. to xlviii. They form a connected piece,

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 59. [2] Ibid., p. 421.

and tell us how the prophet was, "in the visions of God," brought into the land of Israel, and what he saw and was told there. He dwells at great length on the measurements and details of arrangement of the Temple, and communicates directions for its dedication and for its service. He also describes the waters issuing from under the house and going to fertilise the desert; and he lays out minutely the measurements of the sacred territory and the situation of the tribes in the land. Now surely, by all honest criticism, whatever mode of interpretation is applied to one part of this vision should be made to apply to the whole. If one part is a cool, deliberate programme, so should the others. If the other parts are clearly not to be taken in this sense, neither should the ceremonial part. Ezekiel is just as precise and matter-of-fact in the divisions which he makes of the Holy Land as in the ordinances he puts forth for the worship of the sanctuary. Yet the critical school proceeds in the most elaborate fashion to examine this code or programme, and tells us that it is the first attempt to arrange what afterwards became the Levitical Code. Why do they not say also that his geographical sketch is to be understood, say, as the starting-point for the tribal divisions of the book of Joshua, or that his sketch of the Temple is the groundwork of Solomon's? I must confess simply that I cannot understand the principle of a criticism that thus tears one piece out of connection and seeks to make it a serious historical programme, while not a word can be said in favour of treating the other parts in the same way. If two-thirds of the vision are clearly ideal, so must the other third, in whatever way we are to understand the ideal meaning which the prophet meant to convey. If it be urged that Ezekiel did not need to give details for

ritual if a ritual law existed, and that he makes no reference to any law on the subject, it can be rejoined that he speaks in the same way of Temple and land. We cannot gather from his description that the Temple of Solomon was ever built or the land ever divided among the tribes before his day. "This," he says, "shall be the border, whereby ye shall divide the land for inheritance according to the twelve tribes of Israel: . . . concerning the which I lifted up mine hand to give it unto your fathers;"[1] and he gives all the measurements of some house seen in vision without referring to a house which he knew quite well as having stood for centuries. We need not therefore wonder at his bringing in a detailed ritual, as if this were the first time such a thing had been heard or thought of. He is not for the first time in history trying to fix a ritual for a people who had hitherto nothing but custom to guide them. His sketch is too brief altogether for such an attempt. No priesthood could have carried on the service of the sanctuary and regulated the worship of the nation with such a vague and fragmentary manual. As to its being as a literary work the foundation of the later Levitical Code, it is not by any means certain that in language or matter the Levitical Code is dependent upon it. A careful examination has led competent judges to decide that the reverse is the case,[2] though I do not think it necessary to go into this.

But it may be urged, if there was a detailed authoritative law in existence, why did Ezekiel, even in vision, deviate from it? Well, on the critical hypothesis the

[1] Ezek. xlvii. 13, 14.

[2] See, *e.g.*, Bredenkamp, Gesetz und Propheten, p. 116 ff.; Dillmann, Die Bücher Exodus u. Leviticus, p. 524 ff. See also Note XXIX.

Deuteronomic law at least existed as authoritative, and yet Ezekiel deviates from it. If it is still asked, How could he, prophet though he was, quietly set aside the recognised law? the question again arises, After he, a prophet speaking in God's name by direct revelation, sketched this law, how did priests in the exile pass by Ezekiel's draft, and frame a divergent code? In fact, there are insuperable difficulties on every side when this ritual of Ezekiel is taken as a cool, matter-of-fact programme of legislation, put forth as a first attempt at codification; and no argument can be based upon it for the modern theory.

(2.) And then, secondly, it is quite conceivable that the people in the exile should have turned their attention to matters of law. They would be compelled, in order to keep themselves separate from the surrounding heathen, to attend to those matters of personal, ceremonial, and social order which were their national distinctions, and, so far, their very existence as a separate people in the exile is a proof of pre-existing law. But it is not so clear, by any means, that they should for the first time make a study of purely Levitical and sacrificial laws at a time when they had no cultus. Nor, in view of the zeal for the law shown at a later time by the Jews in Babylon, is it so clear that only a few underwent a "conversion in the sense of the prophets." Wellhausen has to suppose a school of people who gave themselves ardently to this study of ritual law. It was a large school, if the number of returning exiles is taken into account. All these must have been in Ezra's secret on this view,—all ardently devoted to the reformation ideas. Now, in point of fact, Ezra's own account is that he had a deficiency of Levites among his volunteers, and had to

urge them to join him and to act as "ministers for the house of *our* God" (Ezra viii. 15 ff.) Moreover, Haggai shows us that the people were very far indeed from being devoted to the reformation ideas; the sacrificial system was slackly observed; and even in Ezra's and Nehemiah's time the picture of the people is anything but that of a community that "had given themselves up body and soul to the reformation ideas" of either morals or worship.[1]

(3.) But, further, difficult as it is to believe that the so-called school for the first time put down in writing what they treasured in their memories, this is not the whole of the hypothesis. Again, and in a much more objectionable form, comes in the supposition of fiction, whereby a false historical setting was invented for the laws of the Levitical Code, by carrying them back to Moses and the desert, simply in order to give the law higher sanction. Not only, for example, was there no tabernacle, such as is described in the Pentateuch, prepared in the wilderness, but even at the time when the story of its construction was fabricated, there was no such tabernacle to have given rise to the fable, nor had any such tabernacle ever existed to give a start to the story.[2] It was simply the legend-spinning invention of men of late time that cut down the dimensions of the Temple to half their size, and feigned that a tabernacle of that size existed in a portable form in the wilderness; and all this simply to make it appear that the Temple worship was of older institution than the time of the building of the Temple. So also a fictitious origin is given for what the Code rep-

[1] Ezra ix. 1 ff.; Neh. v. 1 ff., xiii. 4 ff., 15 ff., 23 ff.; Mal. i. 6 ff., ii. 8 ff.

[2] Wellhausen, p. 37 ff.

resents as other early institutions. In every case in which a law is said to have been given in Mosaic times, the circumstances, if stated, must be similarly explained as invented or suggested in a late time. In this way, all sorts of divergences of the narrative of the Priestly Code from that of the Jehovist are accentuated, and it is made to appear—at the expense, it must be admitted, of wonderful ingenuity—that the former are of exilic time —*i.e.*, of the date of or subsequent to the introduction of the laws.[1]

The question is whether the palm of ingenuity is to be assigned to the writers of these books or to the modern critics; whether a school composed of men like Ezekiel and Ezra were likely to have with boundless inventiveness concocted all this history, or our modern critics are ransacking the treasures of their wits to find an artificial explanation of a thing that is much more simple than they make it? For what could have been the object in inventing history wholesale in this way? To give sanction to the laws, it is said: but on whom was the sanction to bear? If on the men of the priestly school themselves, they were already, on the hypothesis, devoted to the reformation ideas; if on the people at large, the mere manufacture of a history that was new to them was not likely to rouse them from their lethargy and fire them with new zeal; and, so far as we can see, it did not. It is to be remembered—and the remark applies also to the production of Deuteronomy—that this was not a case of a person in secret devising an unheard-of scheme of history, and laying it away to be read by posterity. Nor was it, as I understand the theory, a case of gathering up for a present purpose the old and cherished traditions of a people. The

[1] See Note XXX.

thing was done, so to speak, in open day for a special purpose at the time, a considerable number of persons being engaged in it, and among a people who already had a definite tradition as to their history. Yet, though the people, at least in Jeremiah's days, were critical enough in matters of the national history (Jer. xxvi. 16 ff.), we never hear, either then or at the time of the restoration, of any suspicion being cast upon the account of the history which these law-books contain.

(4.) But the form in which the Levitical Code appears is not favourable to the modern theory of its origin. The laws are in many cases, it will be observed, provided with headings, which vary in a curious manner, as, *e.g.*, "The Lord spake unto Moses," "The Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron," and even "the Lord spake unto Aaron"; and the persons to whom the laws are directed are various, as "the children of Israel," "Aaron and his sons," "all the congregation of the children of Israel," and "Aaron and his sons and all the children of Israel." Such features as these, as well as the manner in which the laws are arranged, the same subject coming up more than once, and the same law being repeated in different places, give one the impression that the laws were collected together from different sources. It looks as if there had been smaller collections, regulating individual observances, and perhaps intrusted to different persons for preservation and execution. At all events, the collection does not present the appearance of a systematic Code. This feature, I should think, is more opposed to the idea of composition by Ezra and a school, who would surely, when the whole system was for the first time to be set down in writing, have proceeded in a more systematic manner, than to the idea of Mosaic origin and gradual modification

in course of time. I have already referred to the peculiarity of the Hebrew speech, whereby the direct words must be put into the mouth of the speaker, when we need only assume the substance of the thing delivered. The headings of those laws, on this common-sense mode of viewing the matter, mean no more than that the laws originally came from Mosaic times; the history is satisfied, and the *bona fides* of the writers is maintained. So that even if the final codification took place as late as Ezra, the Code, and still more the institutions, might with propriety and substantial accuracy be described as Mosaic.

The Biblical writers do not fix for us the time or times at which the laws as they lie before us were written down; and their statements, fairly interpreted, allow us to suppose that the books passed through many literary processes before they reached their final form. The multiplicity of the sources out of which the law-books are composed is a proof of long-continued literary history. The peculiar arrangement of the legal portions, nay, their very divergence from one another, prove that law was for long a living thing, and that the Codes are not resuscitated from the memories of priests or excogitated by scribes. If, as seems quite reasonable, the laws for various ceremonies were, in the hands of those who had charge of them, copied and handed on from generation to generation of priests, it is quite probable that in the course of time there might have happened alterations of the rubric with altered circumstances, and that the final transcript or redaction would thus have a more modern cast than the original. All this, however, does not disprove the antiquity of the legislation nor the early writing of the laws, and it is surely, though not so ingenious, yet a much more ingenuous explanation than to say that the laws

were by a fiction ascribed to ancient time in order to give them an authority to which they were not entitled. By taking the statements of the Biblical writers as they stand, and not burdening them with conclusions for which they are not responsible, we get a more consistent and natural view of the whole history of the law—a view that certainly in itself is more credible to one who is not prejudiced against the Biblical writers, and set to watch for their halting. For the rest, the order of the Codes as Codes written, the relation of laws to one another, and their modifications in detail with advancing time—these are things that criticism may exercise its ingenuity upon, and seek to exhibit in their true lights and proportions. But they are more of archæological than of practical interest in reference to the great point which we wish to ascertain, the origin and development of the religion; and it is mainly because they have been too much bound up with that question that they have acquired so much importance. There can be no harm in critical investigation of this kind, so long as the main course of the history, which rests on its own independent proofs, is taken as the guiding principle of the criticism. It is, to say the least, very doubtful whether at this distance of two or three thousand years we are in a position to determine, with any measure of success, the dates of the respective sources of which the books of the Pentateuch are made up. The extraordinary turns that modern criticism has taken on the subject testify to the difficulty of the problem, if they do not shake our confidence in its ability to solve it. The curious blending of elements in the composite structure of these books, while it impresses on us the magnitude of the task of criticism, suggests a gradual and repeated process of editing, transcribing, and modification which is

perfectly conceivable among a people well acquainted with literary processes. The essential point to be remembered —the point to which all our investigations have tended —is, that the law and the writing of it are much older than modern critics allow; and the phenomenon which the books as books present to us is much more reasonably accounted for on the Biblical principle than on the modern theory: they are a product, in a natural way, of history, both religious and literary—not compositions, framed according to a literary method altogether unparalleled in order to manufacture a history which never was.

CHAPTER XVII.

LAW AND PROPHECY.

The order of law and prophets reversed by modern theory, and this not merely as an order of written documents but of history—(1) Position examined that all the prophets denied the divine authority of sacrifice and ritual laws—Passages from Isaiah, Micah, Hosea, Jeremiah considered—(2) The position that the Deuteronomic Code was introduced through prophetic influence, and with it the impulse given to legalism —Inconsistent character in which the prophets are made to appear in modern theory—The whole position of the prophets as religious guides is to be taken into account — The Covenant, and what it implied— The historical situation in Josiah's time does not agree with modern theory—Nor does the situation at and after the exile—Fundamental harmony of law and prophecy—The history did not turn on a struggle of parties—Law and Gospel.

ACCORDING to the modern theory the Biblical order of law and prophets is reversed into the order of prophets and law. Did this merely amount to the assertion that some of the prophetical writings existed before the Pentateuch had assumed its present form, it might be a defensible position on grounds of literary criticism.[1] It is, however, maintained in the sense that prophetic activity comes historically before the acceptance of authoritative law, and that, in fact, by a course of development, the prophets

[1] Cf. Wellhausen, p. 409.

brought about the introduction of the law. The position which, on this theory, the prophets are made to assume from first to last, and the relation in which they are made to stand towards the whole movement of legislation, are so peculiar that the subject requires some special treatment.

(1.) We have already considered the contention that in all those passages in the earlier writing prophets in which law or laws are mentioned, the reference is only to oral and not to written law. The priests, we are told, like the prophets, gave forth their *toroth* or instructions orally to the people; and the substance of the priestly Torah was chiefly moral, but partly also ceremonial, relating to things clean and unclean. Whatever became of the concrete *toroth* on those subjects, we are assured that the practice of the priests at the altar was never matter of instruction to the laity, and was not written down in a codified shape.[1] It is not made very clear in all this wherein the Torah of the priests differed from that of the prophets; nor is it made clear to what extent, if any, the priests wrote down their moral and ceremonial Torah. What we have particularly to do with here, however, is the attitude of the prophets to the law. It cannot be denied that, in the expressions of a general kind which they employ, they show a high respect for the Torah of the priests. This, however, say the critical historians, was the moral part of the priestly instruction, and it is strenuously maintained that the prophets, down to the time of Jeremiah, denied the divine authority of sacrifice and ritual laws. The situation, as I understand the contention, was this: In pre-exilic antiquity, when the worship of the Bamoth was the rule,

[1] Wellhausen, p. 59.

the main thing in the service was not the rite, but the deity to whom the service was rendered. The historical books that date from pre-exilic time—the books of Judges, Samuel, and Kings—exhibit great varieties in the modes of sacrifice, some of which may correspond to the law of the Pentateuch, while others certainly deviate widely from it, proving that there was no fixed rule.[1] The prophetical books also, "in their polemic against confounding worship with religion," while they "reveal the fact that in their day the cultus was carried on with the utmost zeal and splendour," show that this high estimation rested, not on the opinion that the cultus came from Moses, but simply on the belief that Jahaveh must be honoured by His dependants, just like other gods, by means of offerings and gifts.[2] "According to the universal opinion of the pre-exilic period, the cultus is indeed of very old and (to the people) very sacred usage, but not a Mosaic institution; the ritual is not the main thing in it, and is in no sense the subject with which the Torah deals."[3] So that, in a word, as far as regards the ceremonies of worship, "the distinction between legitimate and heretical is altogether wanting;"[4] the theory of an illegal praxis is impossible, and the legitimacy of the actually existing is indisputable.[5] The prophets, therefore, when they rebuke the people for their sacrifices and offerings, are not to be understood as reproving them for the corruption of a pure law of worship that existed, but as expressing disapproval of the whole sacrificial system, as a thing of mere human device, and destitute of divine sanction. Not only do they show, by thus speaking, that there was no law such as the Levitical Code in their day; but even the prophets,

[1] Wellhausen, p. 55. [2] Ibid., p. 56. [3] Ibid., p. 59.
[4] Ibid., p. 55. [5] Ibid., p. 60.

before the time of Josiah, have nothing to say against the local sanctuaries (so long as they are devoted to the worship of the national God), a proof that the Deuteronomic Code did not come into existence till that period, and much more a proof that it had no divine sanction. The prophets, in a word, appear as the exponents of a tendency the very opposite of the legalising tendency which brought legal Codes into existence.

Great stress, in this argument, is laid upon the declaration of Isaiah. His antipathy to the whole ritual system finds expression, it is said, in the well-known passage in the first chapter of his book: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith Jahaveh: I am weary with the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, and of lambs, and of he-goats. When ye come to look upon my face, who hath required this at your hands, to trample my courts?" This expression, Wellhausen asserts with confidence, "the prophet could not possibly have uttered if the sacrificial worship had, according to any tradition whatever, passed for being specifically Mosaic."[1] But what then becomes of the book of the Covenant, which was surely at this time accepted as an authoritative Code, and is expressly ascribed to Moses? It says, in the law of worship which the critics appeal to as existing up to Josiah's time, and therefore prevailing in Isaiah's days: "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt-offerings, and thy peace-offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen."[2] Or if it is maintained that Isaiah condemned even that early piece of legislation, surely the argument here employed proves too much. For it would make the prophet condemn also the Sabbath

[1] Wellhausen, p. 58. [2] Exod. xx. 24.

as a piece of will-worship, and even reject prayer as a thing displeasing to God, since, in the same connection, he says: "The new moons and Sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; . . . and when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear."[1]

If we allow to Isaiah the perception of a difference between sacrifice as an *opus operatum*, and sacrifice as the expression of a true and obedient heart—and surely the prince of the prophets was capable of drawing such a distinction—his words have a definite and precise meaning, eminently suited to the times and circumstances in which he lived. If we take them as a statement in this bald form, of the history of religious observances in Israel, they are emptied of their ethical as well as their rhetorical force, and land us in a position which is incomprehensible in the circumstances. For what, is it conceived or conceivable, was the worship of a true Israelite in Isaiah's days? Is there any outward worship left that a man like Isaiah himself could take part in? Is this prophet to be refined away into a kind of free-thinker who stood aloof from all outward observances of religion, who "never went to church," as the modern phrase goes, because the whole of the ordinary service of worship was a mere human device? Or if a prophet might thus attain to a position independent of the out-

[1] Isa. i. 13, 15. König (Hauptprobleme, p. 90) endeavours to make a distinction between "I cannot away with" (v. 13) as applied to the Sabbath, and "who hath required?" (v. 12) as applied to offerings; and says that a "cautious exegesis" shows that the things enumerated in vv. 11-16 were looked upon as matters of worship, coming in different senses and degrees from God. "Cautious" is scarcely the term that I should apply to such exegesis; for I doubt very much whether such fine distinctions ever occurred to the minds of the prophets.

ward aids of devotion, what of the common people? What worship is to be allowed to them at all, if all that went on at the Temple is condemned, and if the condemnation means what the critics say? For, be it observed, Isaiah is not indifferent to these things, as things that might be good enough for the vulgar, but were too gross for him. Whatever the things are to which he is referring, he refers to them with displeasure; and if there is a possibility of legitimate worship at all, we must regard his words not as a condemnation of that, but of the spirit in which it was performed, or of the abuses with which it was surrounded. A mere historical, unimpassioned statement as to the origin of sacrificial worship is out of the question.

Again, it has been said that the words of Micah, the contemporary of Isaiah, prove the same thing: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi. 8). Says Wellhausen, "Although the blunt statement of the contrast between cultus and religion is peculiarly prophetic, Micah can still take his stand upon this: 'It hath been told thee, O man, what Jehovah requires.' It is no new matter, but a thing well known, that sacrifices are not what the Torah of the Lord contains,"[1] which is not a fair interpretation of the prophet's words, for the command to do justly and love mercy does not exclude a command to offer sacrifice. But this is the very prophet who, in almost identical terms with Isaiah, anticipates the time when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted, and all nations shall flow into it. So that the argument, if pushed to its conclusion, would prove that

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 58.

these two prophets denied the divine authority of all outward observances of religion; and yet would ascribe to them the absurdity of maintaining great sanctity for a Temple and an altar, whose service was otiose or altogether improper.

In the same way appeal is made to the well-known declaration of Hosea, "I desired mercy and not sacrifice" (Hosea vi. 6). One would have thought that the prophet's meaning was made quite clear by the words that follow, "and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings." I confess I am astonished that a passage like this should be insisted upon by professional students of Hebrew; but it would almost seem that, in their anxiety to establish a hypothesis, some can not only ignore poetry and sentiment in the Hebrew writings, but even shut their eyes to plain matters of grammar and rhetoric. The slightest reference to the usage of the language will suffice to show how little worth is the argument based on the text before us. When we read in Prov. viii. 10, "Receive my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold," we perceive that the two forms of expression explain one another. Who would conclude from the phrase "and not silver" that it was absolutely forbidden in all circumstances to take silver? Or again, when we read, "Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man in the way, and not a fool in his folly" (Prov. xvii. 12), does any one conclude that it was of no consequence what became of a man exposed to the attack of a wild beast, so long as he kept out of the way of a fool? The prophet, in brief, says only what Samuel said long before him, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams," though the seer of Ramah himself offered sacrifices as a regular religious observance.

What he did, no doubt his successors in the prophetic office countenanced; and there is absolutely no proof that, up to the time of Josiah, the Temple at Jerusalem was a place at which no purer service was known than that practised at the high places. The writer of the books of the Kings, though his testimony cannot be pressed here, had *some* good reason for singling out certain kings who introduced heathen corruptions into the Temple service, and instancing the attempts, successful or otherwise, to abolish them by others. To suppose that he acted arbitrarily in this matter is to criticise away his accounts altogether, and would leave us no assurance of the truth of even the account of Josiah's reformation. There is no reason to doubt that at certain times, and under the more faithful of the kings, the worship of the central sanctuary at Jerusalem was observed with something of the purity and regularity which were maintained after the time at which the critics allow the reform took place. To take the case of Isaiah, can any of the modern school tell us what led that prophet to clothe the vision of his inauguration to the prophetic work (Isa. vi) in the dress which he gives to it, and why, if the Temple service was full of abominations, its furniture and arrangements should have been chosen for the imagery of one of his highest flights of prophetic inspiration? What was the altar from which a live coal was taken, the touching of his lips by which was to purge his iniquity? One would have thought there was more need—if the modern position is correct—for the purifying influence to proceed in the opposite direction, from the prophet to the altar, and that the message delivered to the prophet should have been like that of the prophet against the altar of Bethel (1 Kings xiii. 2).

But we are told confidently that Jeremiah gives con-

clusive proof of the modern theory when he says (vii. 22): "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hearken unto my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Well, if we are bound at all hazards to take words literally, the words are literally true; for, according to the account of Exodus itself, the command in the day of the deliverance from Egypt was not a command in regard to burnt-offerings and sacrifices. The people at that crisis had to make the grand venture of faith and obedience; and not till they were delivered and safe in the desert was there any "command concerning" a system of sacrifices. It is this idea that is working in the prophet's mind, though I do not believe he imagined for a moment that his words would be taken as a *historical statement* of the late origin of sacrifices, or of the time of its introduction at all. The polemic was not as to the *date* of introduction of sacrifice, but as to its rightful place and meaning. Jeremiah was not opposed to all ritual service, as Graf himself admitted. His words are just an expansion of the fundamental prophetic dictum of Samuel that to obey is better than sacrifice. The thing he is insisting on, as all the prophets do, is the utter worthlessness of sacrifices and offerings without the obedience of the life and the fidelity of the heart. And to make the words mean more is to make Jeremiah declare that up to his time there was no law for worship whatever, and yet worship at that period without authorised ceremonial and sacrifice is inconceivable.

(2.) On the other hand, we are told by the advocates of the modern theory that it was through prophetic influence that the Code of Deuteronomy was brought into existence

and recognition, and that the movement, once set agoing, resulted also in the codification of the Levitical law; that, in fact, the prophets seeking to give permanent form and authoritative sanction to their teaching, embodied it in the form of a code; that thus prophecy had its final development, but in reaching this development destroyed itself. Speaking of the manner in which the Deuteronomic Code was brought in, Wellhausen says: "With the tone of repudiation in which the earlier prophets, in the zeal of their opposition, had occasionally spoken of practices of worship at large, there was nothing to be achieved; the thing to be aimed at was not abolition but reformation, and the end, it was believed, would be helped by concentration of all ritual in the capital" (p. 26). He admits, indeed, that merely to abolish the holy places, and only to limit to one locality the cultus, which was still to be the main concern, was by no means the wish of the prophets—though it came about as an incidental result of their teaching (p. 23). This, however, seems to be hardly consistent with the preceding position; nor do I think it is reconcilable with a fair interpretation of the declarations of the prophets on the subject. The influence of the prophets cannot be said to have been at any time in the direction of the enforcement of external observances, except in so far as they urged the people to that change of heart which would result in such observances; and there is no proof from their own writings that they knew of any way of curing the people's godlessness but the exercise of repentance and the return to heart religion.

If there is any one class in the Old Testament history to whom we must accord the title of earnestness and sincerity of purpose, it is the prophets. The most superficial reader must perceive their deep religious devotion,

their freedom from self-seeking and time-serving. It is difficult, however, to reconcile the admission of these qualities with the characters they exhibit and the parts they are made to play on the modern theory. Wellhausen, for example, attempts to prove that Isaiah never laboured for the removal of the Bamoth, but only for their purification;[1] although he himself tells us that all writers of the Chaldean period associate monotheism in the closest way with unity of worship (p. 27), and admits that Isaiah himself gave a special pre-eminence in his estimation to Jerusalem, and that "even as early as the time of Micah the temple must have been reckoned a house of God of an altogether peculiar order, so as to make it a paradox to put it on a level with the Bamoth of Judah."[2] And yet these two prophets are relied upon as leading witnesses to prove that the whole ritual system was not only without authority, but positively displeasing to God. The ques-

[1] The reason given for this statement should not be passed over; it is characteristic of Wellhausen's method of proof: "In one of his latest discourses his anticipation for that time of righteousness, and the fear of God which is to dawn after the Assyrian crisis, is: 'Then shall ye defile the silver covering of your graven images, and the golden plating of your molten images; ye shall cast them away as a thing polluted: Begone! shall ye say unto them' (xxx. 22). If he thus hopes for a purification from superstitious accretions of the places where Jehovah is worshipped, it is clear that he is not thinking of their total abolition" (p. 25 f.) We will leave the circles in which "appreciation of scientific results can be looked for at all" (p. 9), to determine here whether the "accretions" are merely the plating of the images—as those who believe image-worship was the authorised religion would no doubt say—or the images themselves, as Wellhausen himself seems to imply (p. 46), in which case one would suppose there would be little use of these places of worship at all. Pyramids of "scientific results" are poised upon such precarious points, but I take it that Isaiah was not one to concern himself, like the scribes and Pharisees, with such distinctions (Matt. xxiv. 16-18). See before, chap. ix. p. 228; comp. p. 235 f.

[2] Wellhausen, p. 25.

tion is whether the inconsistency is to be attributed to the prophets or to be charged against a vicious theory; for other prophets fare no better at the hands of the critics. For, let us come down to Jeremiah, who was contemporary with the Deuteronomic reformation, and who has even been supposed to have had a hand in the composition of the book or the Code. We find that prophet, so far from trusting to the mere acceptance of a written code for reformation, going beyond any of his predecessors in the inwardness of his teaching.[1] He has reached, finally, the conception of personal heart religion as a thing far before a mere national adoption of a national God, and speaks of the law written in the heart. How a person with such views—not to speak of his conviction that law had no divine sanction—should labour to elaborate a book like Deuteronomy, and trust to its reception to bring about the state of things he desired, it is very hard to understand. Or if Jeremiah did indeed help the introduction of Deuteronomy, he at the same time went far beyond it in the unfolding of its teaching; and what then becomes of the assertion, that the codifying of the law put an end to the free activity of the prophets? No wonder that prophecy, in reaching this position, destroyed itself, for the prophets had stultified themselves. There is here an exhibition of inconsistency which requires explanation, and the explanation that is given is peculiar. "In his early years," we are told,[2] "Jeremiah had a share in the introduction of the law; but in later times he shows himself little edified by the effects it produced; the lying pen of the scribes, he says, has written for a lie (Jer. viii. 7-9)." To say nothing of the very doubtful determination of early and late in Jeremiah's utterances on this subject, we are

[1] Jer. iii. 16; xxxi. 31 ff. [2] Wellhausen, Hist. of Israel, p. 403.

asked to believe not only that the prophet had a share in the introduction of a code which pronounces a curse on those who shall not observe it, and afterwards turned his back upon all ritual law, but also that he allowed the book of his prophecies to go forth (Jer. xxxvi. 4, 5, 32) with the record of his inconsistency on its face. Had not the prophet of Anathoth trouble enough in his lifetime that he must be thus tortured in modern days? Or are we to say that a character so vacillating deserved all that he suffered? Yet Vatke would build him a sepulchre, by claiming him as the earliest witness for the late origin and unhistorical character of the Mosaic law.[1] It will hardly be denied that the prototype of modern critics is made to appear in rather a sorry character; for, if all this is true, he utters his own condemnation (Jer. xiv. 14). Again, it is not easy to comprehend how Ezekiel, pining over the low condition of his countrymen in exile, and reaching those spiritual intuitions expressed in his vision of the dry bones, and the waters issuing from the sanctuary, should at the same time believe that the remedy for his people's misfortunes was to be found in a minute observance of ceremonial ordinances, and occupy himself with a codification—on a limited scale—of Temple ritual, as if the putting down of Levites and the putting up of priests was to bring about a national revival. Nor does he, in point of fact, represent things in that order. All these things are good enough when the people are of one mind in serving their Lord, and desire to give expression to their active religious life: they are absolutely powerless to produce such a life, as all the prophets well knew.

In order to perceive how the prophets stood to the law, we must take into account their whole position as religious

[1] Bibl. Theol., p. 220 f.; Bredenkamp, Gesetz und Propheten, p. 106.

teachers, and their relation to the religious movement of the nation. Kuenen, as we have seen in another connection,[1] insists upon the common ground on which people and prophets stood—viz., that Jahaveh was Israel's God, and Israel Jahaveh's people. This, he says, can be traced back to Moses himself, whose "great work and enduring merit" it was "not that he introduced into Israel any particular religious forms and practices, but that he established the service of Jahveh among his people upon a moral footing. 'I will be to you a God, and ye shall be to me a people.' So speaks Jahveh, through Moses, to the Israelitish tribes.[2] This reciprocal covenant between Jahveh and His people, sealed by the deliverance from Egyptian bondage, is guaranteed by the fact that the ark, Jahveh's dwelling-place, accompanies the Israelites on the journey in the desert, and afterwards remains established in their midst."[3] Kuenen thus admits that there was a "reciprocal covenant between Jahveh and His people," sealed by a historical occurrence, and vouched for by the existence of a religious symbol. We have already argued (p. 338 f.) that such a covenant is inconceivable without some attendant ceremonial institutions; and at this initial point, it seems, we may find the explanation of the real attitude of the prophets to the law. Kuenen himself hints at it when he says, "On their part the people must remain faithful to the conditions of the pact concluded with Jahveh. These conditions are principally moral ones. This is the great thing. Jahveh is distinguished from the rest of the gods in this, that he will be served, not merely by sacrifices and feasts, but also,

[1] See chap. xii. p. 307.
[2] Exod. vi. 7; Levit. xxvi. 45; Deut. xxix. 13.
[3] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. pp. 292, 293.

nay, in the first place, by the observance of the moral commandments which form the chief contents of the ten words."[1] Quite so; and this is just what all the Biblical writers say. But why slip in this, "not merely by sacrifices and feasts," if these are not only not commanded, but actually wrong? There can be no doubt whatever that the people regarded sacrifices and ceremonies as observances well-pleasing to God, and signs of their adherence to the Covenant. It is doubtful how a people, situated as they were, could have kept up their recollection of the Covenant relation without outward service and ceremony. Have we, in this nineteenth century, got so far that we can dispense with outward observances which we regard as divinely appointed or divinely approved? Or if the prophets disagreed with this deeply rooted feeling in the popular mind, inseparably linked with that conviction which Kuenen says prophets and people held in common, they not only fail to give us clear indications of the fact, but they are in opposition to the writers of prophetic spirit and to the prophetic men who guided the nation in early times. For from the very beginning sacrifice appears as a regular and acceptable expression of devotion. The earliest of all the codes, the book of the Covenant, occurring in a prophetic writing, and containing prescriptions of a ceremonial as well as of a moral kind, proves the close union of morality and observance from the first, and shows that, in the constitution of Israel, and in the conception of the nation, the two are inseparable. And if, according to Kuenen, the people were right in the matter of fact as to a covenant dating from the time of Moses, and had, from that time onwards, practised sacrifices and other observances as marks of their allegiance to their

[1] Relig. of Israel, vol. i. p. 293. Cf. Allan Menzies, p. 24.

covenant God, it will require more than the citation of a few rhetorical passages to prove that the prophets regarded sacrifice and observance in themselves as wrong, or of mere human device. Kuenen himself, in the passage quoted from him, gives the key to the true exegesis of such passages: "Not merely by sacrifices and feasts, but also, nay, in the first place, by the observance of the moral commandments." The prophets are, in fact, in all such polemic, combating the germ of what became the monstrous doctrine of Rabbinism, that Israel was created in order to observe the law.

This attitude of the prophets to the law is exhibited in the circumstances of the time of Josiah which culminated in his reformation. When it is said that the worship of the high places had become so corrupt that a reformation was felt to be necessary, let us be careful to understand what that means. It was not that at many high places there was rendered to Jahaveh a worship which should have been rendered to Him at one central sanctuary. The worship of the Bamoth was part of a great national defection. The needed reformation had much more to do, as Wellhausen admits, than to gather into one central place all the abuses of many high places; and it is altogether a weak understatement of the case to say that "even Jerusalem and the house of Jehovah there *might* need *some* cleansing, but it was clearly entitled to a preference over the obscure local altars."[1] There was required above all things a reformation of *religion,* not merely of worship; and the prophets were not the men—Jeremiah certainly was not the man—to rest satisfied with anything else. The message of Huldah the prophetess, on the occasion of the discovery of the law-book, foretold "evil upon this place,"

[1] Wellhausen, p. 27.

"because they have forsaken me and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands" (2 Kings xxii. 17). And so we see that the work done by Josiah was of a thorough kind; the co-operation of priests, prophets, and people was indicative of a movement of the national conscience; and the evils put away are of a much more serious kind than merely the worshipping of Jahaveh at various high places. "The king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the keepers of the door, to bring forth out of the temple of Jahaveh all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven," &c., &c. (2 Kings xxiii. 4 ff.), beginning with a cleansing of the central sanctuary itself. And let it not be supposed that these were recognised up till this time as elements of the national worship. The book of the Covenant itself—which is supposed to have been in existence for two hundred years—had said, immediately before the words relied on as allowing the multiplicity of sanctuaries: "Ye shall not make other gods with me; gods of silver or gods of gold, ye shall not make unto you" (Exod. xx. 23); and had reiterated the warning against making "mention of the name of other gods" (Exod. xxiii. 13), and bowing down to the gods of the nations, or serving them, or doing after their works, but "thou shalt utterly overthrow them, and break in pieces their pillars" (Exod. xxiii. 24). These things were indeed thoroughly inconsistent with the whole position which—by the confession of the nation as implied in the prophetic utterances—Israel sustained to Jahaveh; and if the sin of them did not come home to them through prophetic rebukes or through their knowledge of the book of the Covenant, the discovery of a hundred other codes

could not have convinced them. The truth is that the evils had pressed upon the hearts of good men for long before: Hezekiah had partially done what Josiah now did more thoroughly; and the powerful upheaval of public sentiment that was produced cannot have an adequate cause in a mere, or in a primary, desire to centralise the worship. In a word, the idea of worship in one place cannot be taken by itself and apart from the nature of the worship which Jahaveh claimed. The tendency towards reform was there before the alleged contrivance of producing a code was resorted to. The book did not produce what was the essential part of the reform; and the reform is quite conceivable on the supposition of the discovery of any code, and had already proceeded a great way before the book of the law was brought to light.

Nor were the circumstances materially different when the later reformation took place after the exile. The little community under Joshua and Zerubbabel had returned to Jerusalem, and held a struggling existence for more than half a century [1] before Ezra made his appearance with his book, which is said to have been the Pentateuch law now first come into existence. It was the sense of their national position and national calling that had brought them thither; they did not come for the purpose of observing a ritual law, but for the purpose of keeping alive a nationality and exhibiting their faith in the divine promises. This much the teaching of the prophets had effected, though the fruits of prophetic teaching were tardy, and brought to maturity by the

[1] Edict of Cyrus, 538. The return of exiles under Zerubbabel and Joshua was in B.C. 536, and twenty years later (Haggai and Zechariah) the Temple was consecrated. The arrival of Ezra was in 458. Law promulgated, 444. Cf. Wellhausen, p. 492 ff.

sufferings of the exile. I am willing to admit that the influence of Ezekiel was a powerful factor in leading to the restoration, but I see another direction of his influence than that of codification of law. As in a former chapter I maintained that the doubtful or figurative language of a writer should be interpreted by his clearer and more unequivocal utterances, so I should say here that we are to look not to the programme of legislation which Ezekiel saw in vision, but to the reviving Spirit, breathing upon the dry bones, as the motive power which was uppermost in the mind of the prophet of the exile.

The more closely the matter is looked at, the more clearly will it appear that it is impossible to dissever the moral from the ceremonial part of the law of Israel. Moses himself is represented as a prophet;[1] and prophecy has its legal, just as the law has its prophetical, side. The idea of holiness is common to both. The law links even the meanest ceremonial observance with this moral attribute: "Ye shall be holy men unto me, neither shall ye eat any flesh that is torn of beasts in the field;"[2] and prophecy recognises a clean and an unclean land and offerings.[3] Even the prophet who speaks most exclusively of the Holy One of Israel (Isa. lv. 5) expresses abhorrence of the eating of swine's flesh and so forth (Isa. lxv. 4; lxvi. 17). The rules for purifications and sacrifices indicate clearly, not only that these observances were of an educative character, but also that they did not come in the place of moral requirements, as if they were ends in themselves. The sacrifices and offerings do not effect atonement for moral offences, nor do they constitute the

[1] Deut. xviii. 15; Hosea xii. 13.
[2] Exod. xxii. 31. Comp. Levit. xi. 44-47; xix. 2, 15-19.
[3] Amos vii. 17: Hosea ix. 3-5.

whole religious service of Israel. The sins atoned for are those that affect the theocratic relation of the people, the offerings are the outward signs of the inward homage due to Jahaveh. We need not, indeed, wonder that the prophets, in the situation in which they found themselves before the exile, laid so little stress on the ritual worship, for it was powerless to cure the evils which they deplored. To what purpose indeed would it have been for a preacher of righteousness like Amos, addressing a people who trampled on the most fundamental laws of humanity, to urge to the more sedulous performance of outward acts of worship; or for a prophet with insight into God's love such as Hosea enjoyed, to direct a people openly apostate and idolatrous in heart to begin with a mere reformation of cultus? Isaiah again and his fellow-prophets of the south had before them a people—such as all ages and all countries have produced—who thought to make up for wickedness of life and hollowness of heart by loud-sounding devotion and ostentatious worship; and it is no wonder that such men contemptuously scouted the whole system of outward observance, which was that and nothing more. It was needless to insist upon the sign when the thing signified was wanting—for the outward form was then a gross lie; and just because the mission of the prophets was to insist upon the underlying moral requirements of the law, for that reason they made light of its ceremonial elements, which had no basis nor reason for existence apart from these moral requirements. On the other hand, we find the prophet Haggai, when his contemporaries in the coldness of their devotion committed the opposite mistake from pre-exilic Israel, reproving them for the scantiness of their offerings; although both he and Zechariah, who laboured for the restoration

of the Temple and its service, are quite clear as to the supreme duty of heart religion and the inutility of a mere *opus operatum*.[1] The position of Malachi is to be particularly noted, because in him we find a distinctly ceremonial tone (chap. i.), and because he belongs to the time of the alleged introduction of the Priestly Code. It is very hard to believe that a priesthood such as he chides (in chap. ii.) was fit to be trusted with the task of elaborating an authoritative code.[2] It is much more likely that the prophet reproves them for deviation from a standard that was far older and much higher. In any case it is to be observed that this prophet, though technical as any priest could be, is at one with all the prophets as to the essentials of religion.

It is inaccurate, therefore, to represent the prophetic and priestly classes as opposed, and to make the history turn upon the preponderance of the one over the other. There was no greater antagonism than that which in a normal condition of things exists between the inner truth and its outward manifestation — which, however, becomes pronounced when the outward expression is made the whole, or is represented as having the vitality and the importance of the inner truth. Such times there were in the history of Israel, as in the religious history of all nations, when the priesthood, peculiarly liable to settle down to formality and routine, and peculiarly liable to the temptations besetting any privileged order, encouraged the people to boast, saying, "The temple of the Lord are we," or even exercised their office for their own gain. At such times the prophetic voice was raised in scathing rebukes, whose terms almost lead one to conclude that in the prophetic estimation the whole priestly order,

[1] Haggai ii. 12 f.; Zech. vii. 6, 9, 10.

[2] Bredenkamp, Gesetz und Propheten, p. 120.

and all the ceremonies over which they presided, were in their essence wrong. Yet even in the midst of such rebukes there is a tone of respect for the law, and a recognition of the sacred function of the priest. So also when we come to any crisis in the history in which a positive advance is made, we perceive that it is not by a conquest of one party over the other, but by the hearty co-operation of both, that the movement of reform or advance succeeds. Moses, the forerunner of the prophets, has Aaron the priest beside him; and Joshua is still surrounded by priests in the carrying out of his work. Samuel is both priest and prophet; David and Solomon in the same way are served or admonished by both. In Josiah's time we see the priest Hilkiah as eager for the introduction of reform as the prophet or prophets who prepared—as is alleged—the Code which was to be recognised;[1] although the Code was not to be to the advantage of the Jerusalem priesthood, according to the modern view of it, for it was to bring to the capital all the priests of the high places who should so desire, and thus reduce the emoluments and lower the prestige of the ministers of the central sanctuary. Jeremiah was of the priests of Anathoth, and Ezekiel, too, was a priest-prophet. So that at every turning-point in the nation's life, when an advance was made, or a return to a better mind, the two classes are seen working in harmony. Which is just saying in other words that the better mind

[1] And so some would have it that the Code is a composite work. "The Deuteronomic *torah*," says Cheyne, "is in fact the joint work of at least two of the noblest members of the prophetic and the priestly orders." —Jeremiah, His Life and Times, p. 63 f. One may obtain, from this, some idea of the critical principles on which the separation of sources is effected, and may be inclined to ask, if two writers of different tendencies could work so harmoniously here, why similar tendencies should be put so far apart elsewhere.

resulted in a better life, and that faithfulness of heart was expressed in the better observance of the authoritative forms of religion.

On this subject, as on many others connected with the history of Israel, we must beware of concluding that distinctions which we can abstractly draw, and of which the history shows the possibility, were actually drawn at the time. "The passion of the human mind," says Dr A. B. Davidson, "is for distinctions and classification. Broad distinctions are rare in the Old Testament. The course of revelation is like a river, which cannot be cut up into sections. The springs at least of all prophecy can be seen in the two prophets of northern Israel; but the rain which fed those fountains fell in the often unrecorded past."[1] On reviewing the history we may perceive the two currents of influence, the priestly and the prophetic, and in analysing the combined stream of national life we may be able to separate them in thought and assign different effects to them respectively. But we are not for all that to jump to the conclusion that priests and prophets were arrayed in hostile camps, and existed like two parties in a modern state. The prophets are as free in their denunciations of prophets when these are unfaithful, as they are in their rebukes of the excesses of the priests. The truth is, that on this low view of a struggle of parties, the history of Israel is as devoid of interest, as it is incapable of explanation. When it did come to a struggle of parties in Israel, in the later stages of the history, when some leaned to Egypt and some to Assyria, the days of Israel's independence were numbered. The thing that made two parties in *ancient* Israel was not the question of ritual or no ritual, not the question of written Torah or oral Torah, but the question of fidelity to their national

[1] Expositor, third series, vol. vi. p. 163.

God, and purity from heathen contamination. The daily observances of the Temple might go on unrecorded for years—as I believe they went on far more regularly than is now supposed—and call for no remark. But as soon as these were rested in as the essentials of religion, or improved and adorned by a tampering with heathen ways and an aping of idolatrous rites, then the prophetic voice was raised, and in such terms that we perceive how all the time these men knew wherein the essentials of true religious worship consisted.

Though, therefore, the legalistic tendency set in after the great prophets had done their work, the two things were not cause and effect. It was not the "prophets that were the destroyers of old Israel," but it was Israel that destroyed itself. A mistake may be very readily committed from taking too narrow a view of development, and assuming that what is immediately subsequent to something else results naturally from it. There are *re*-actions and recoils as well as direct influences in the same line. The true succession of Old Testament prophets is found in the Gospel, not in the scribes. Though Jesus Christ followed the scribes, He did not develop their teaching. He did not, however, deny its historical basis. He was the direct successor of the prophets, but He assumed and took for granted that law preceded prophecy, and that law was also of divine authority. From His polemic with the scribes and Pharisees of His day, one might hastily claim Him as maintaining the human origin of the Codes, and the natural basis of sacrifice. Yet, though He rejected the traditions and commandments of men, He attended even to the ceremonial of the law, and in His life and teaching treated the law as given through Moses by divine authority.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION.

The modern theory is "thorough-going," but does not do justice to the facts of the case—Its arbitrary treatment of the writers and books of the Old Testament—Its weakness "as a whole," when great crises and turning-points are to be explained—Does not go to the core of the religion, but dwells on external details—Rejecting the supernatural, it is itself unnatural—Even on its literary side, not so strong as it seems—Objection to the Biblical theory that it does not make room for development—Objection answered: true development exhibited—The appeal to religions of "primitive peoples" considered—The Semitic disposition to religion—Reference to early chapters of Genesis—Comparative religion—Bearing of the whole subject on Inspiration.

We have thus endeavoured to estimate fairly the two theories of Israel's earlier religious history. No attempt has been made to present all the details in which the theories are opposed; but consideration has been fixed on the fundamental lines and underlying principles. Our conclusion has been, that the Biblical theory, when not burdened with assumptions with which it has been often "traditionally" encumbered, will stand the test of a sober and common-sense criticism, as an account of the existence in Israel, in early or so-called pre-prophetic times, of very distinctive religious conceptions and religious ordinances, obtained in connection with well-marked

historical events and under well-determined historical conditions.

The modern critical theory, if it has been able to point out difficulties connected with the Biblical theory, especially as it has been traditionally maintained, raises difficulties of a much more serious kind in the way of its own acceptance. At first sight, it has all the attractions of a "good-going" hypothesis; for it promises to exhibit the growth of religious conceptions and religious observances from the lowest stage to their finally developed phases; and, considering the long course which Israel's history ran, and the broad field available for observation, this is what we should expect to find practicable. But the theory is too thorough-going, for it goes in the teeth of evident obstacles, and refuses to bend its way to embrace plain facts; and what we want is a theory that will give the best explanation of things that cannot be disputed. Were it the case that we knew practically nothing of the development of Israel's religion in Palestine, it might be very well for a theory to sketch a scheme which would be another contribution to the histories of religious thought. But there are books, there are men, there are abiding effects to be accounted for; and in face of these the modern theory shows its weakness. We have conducted our inquiry on the narrowest possible grounds, by restricting ourselves to compositions whose dates are assigned by the critics themselves;[1] and on that narrow ground I am prepared to rest my objections to the two cardinal points of the theory. On the one hand, I maintain that the earliest writing prophets, Amos and Hosea, give clear evidence that the ethic and spiritual nature of the religion was apprehended and firmly possessed in

[1] See Note XXXI.

their day, and long before it—evidence which can only be set aside by a forced interpretation of some passages and an excision of others. On the other hand, I maintain that the existence, at what is called the earliest literary age, of these same books and likewise of the book of the Covenant in the heart of a Jehovistic writing, ascribing to Moses authoritative and specifically religious institutions, relating to sacrifice and ritual as well as idolatry and morals, is irreconcilable with the fundamental positions of the modern theory on the subject of law.

Wellhausen, in one place, says it would not be surprising, considering the whole character of the polemic against Graf's hypothesis, if the next objection should be that it is not able to construct the history.[1] My great objection to the theory is, not that it cannot construct a history, for the ingenuity of critical writers is equal to that, but that it does not leave sound materials out of which a credible history can be constructed. The hypothesis of Graf carries with it the assumption that the narratives accompanying the laws of the Pentateuch are not history in the proper sense of the word at all, but the product of late imaginative writers, and, in short, fictitious. And not only are the narratives of the Pentateuch so treated; the historical and prophetical books are in a similar manner discredited, so as to be admissible as testimony only after they have been expurgated or adjusted on the principles of the underlying theory. The historical books, we are told, were written long after the events they relate; and even when they contain the records of historical facts, these records are overlaid with later interpretations of the facts, or even glossed over to obliterate them. Even the prophetical books are not

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 367, footnote.

to be relied upon to determine the religious history; for the books, in the first place, have undergone great alterations in the process of canonisation—and in the second place, even where there is an unambiguous declaration of a prophet as to a certain sequence of events, it is open to us to accept or reject his statement on "critical" grounds. Modern critical writers, in fact, can scarcely lay their hands on a single book and say, Here is a document to be relied upon to give a fair, unbiassed, untarnished account of things as they were. The blemishes that criticism seeks to remove are not such as may be contracted by ordinary ancient documents in the course of their literary transmission. They have come into the documents in the interests of a theory (and indeed they have a wonderful coherence in tenor), and by another theory they are to be eliminated. The literary task of critical writers, therefore, is not so much to discover and account for facts of a history long past, as to account for the account which later writers give of them. The history which Wellhausen constructs is in fact a "history of the tradition"; and in many cases it seems a laborious endeavour to show how something very definite grew out of nothing very appreciable. The further one follows the processes, the more apparent it becomes that the endeavour is not so much to find out by fair interpretation what the writer says, as to discover his motive for saying it, or what he wishes to conceal. He belongs to some class, or has some political expediency to serve; or he lives in a circle of certain ideas, and these *tendencies* are made to give birth to the facts, instead of being, as is more likely, the result of the facts. "The idea as idea is older than the idea in history," says Wellhausen;[1] and

[1] Hist. of Israel, p. 36.

he is continually applying this maxim in the sense that when an idea takes possession of the leading men of a certain time, they straightway proceed to invest it with a historical character, by placing its exemplification or embodiment back at some remote period of the history. I think the maxim is better illustrated in the processes of Wellhausen and his school, who first find an "idea," and then seek by main force to read it into the unwilling documents. In this way a history is no doubt constructed, but the supporting beams of it are subjective prepossessions, and the materials are only got by discrediting the sources from which they are drawn.

I say this is a very serious attitude to assume towards the writers of the Old Testament books, if it can in any degree be justified; and if it is not well justified, it is a very serious objection to any theory that requires it. The men who moulded the history of Israel were the men who had most to do with the production and preservation of the national literature. We know what sort of men they were. But, on the modern theory, the greatest characters in Israel's history, instead of being spontaneous actors in a great life-drama, are merely posturing and acting a part on a stage. What they give us as history is merely their fond idea of what history should have been; in many cases it is not even so much, but pure invention to give a show of antiquity to what had to be accounted for and magnified in their own day. History was never made in this way. Men that make history such as Israel's history was, are intent on great purposes, moved by noble ends; but what we are asked to contemplate at the great crises and turning-points is a set of men thinking how they will elaborate a scheme of history. Fictions become the greatest facts, and the French critic has carried out

the theory to its true conclusion when he ascribes the great bulk of the Hebrew literature to the free creation of a school of theologians after the exile. "The theologians and writers of that time," he says, "have been able to give such a character of life to the creations of their genius that posterity has been thereby deceived, and has believed in a Moses living 1500 years before our era, whereas this Moses was only created in the fourth century, and had no more reality than an incomparable fiction."[1] And thus the great merit of the Hebrew race, the great quality for which they have distinguished themselves in the world, is their power of imagination! Such a mode of viewing the Old Testament writings, as the conduct of the critics shows, leaves individual critics to construct each his own scheme of the history. To most people it will appear that, if such a mode of treatment is once introduced, the inquiry into the true course of Israel's history is a matter of the utmost uncertainty; to many the inquiry would probably cease to have much practical interest.

It is to be lamented, I think, that now at the very close of the nineteenth century a tone of criticism should reassert itself which is out of harmony with the liberal views with which we have been priding ourselves we had learned to regard all nations. So much has our knowledge of the religions of the world extended, and our sympathy for the struggles of the religious instinct been stirred, that we might expect from leaders of investigation in these subjects a disposition to look for the best side of all

[1] Maurice Vernes, Résultats de l'Exégèse Biblique, p. 227. Of course the conclusions of Vernes are disowned by the prevailing school, but the *principle* of his criticism, the imagination of writers of the exilian age, is frankly avowed by Wellhausen, p. 419. See Note XXXII.

religions, and to put the most favourable construction on the efforts of their founders. It is not so long ago that it used to be the orthodox thing to characterise the prophet of Arabia as a designer, a schemer, an impostor; but it had come to be generally admitted that, in his early struggles at least, Mohammed was a sincere inquirer, following out lines of thought and belief that existed in a somewhat narrow circle before him. Kuenen, however, has practically come back to the old position. According to this view, Mohammed had an eye to Christians and Jews, and counted upon the latter particularly for recognition of his teaching. And so he framed his device of that *milla* of Ibrahim, of which at first he never thought, for "the opinion that Mohammed came to awaken and to restore what already existed amongst his people, if only as a faint reminiscence of a distant past, finds no support in the Qoran when read in the light of criticism."[1] Great is criticism of the modern critics! It has discovered another *scheme*, like the schemes and programmes and fictions of the Hebrew writers. And so the boasted enlightenment and toleration of the nineteenth century comes round again to explain the origin of religions by the fanaticism of prophets and the frauds of priests.[2]

But, it is said, the theory must be taken as a whole, and apart from varieties of opinion that may be held on details. It is just when thus taken that I find the greatest difficulty in accepting it, because there is so marked a disagreement between the whole and its component parts. There are certain great outstanding facts whose

[1] National Religions, p. 19.

[2] A melancholy example is furnished in Lippert's 'Allgemeine Geschichte des Priesterthums,' published as recently as 1884. König, Falsche Extreme, p. 2.

existence cannot be ignored,—such as the prophetic activity in Israel, the belief in one national or one sole Deity, the national testimony to an early history of great moment, the ascription of legislation to Moses; and the incompetence of the modern theory to set these in their true perspective is very striking. On the one hand, the Biblical theory gives definite connections for events, and historical occasions for transitions and advances. On the other hand, the modern theory is strong in minute analysis, but weak in face of great controlling facts. It will laboriously strain out a gnat in the critical process of determining the respective authors of a complex passage, but when it comes to a real difficulty in history it boldly swallows the camel and wipes its mouth, saying, "I have eaten nothing." Nabiism, or the prophetic activity, even Jahavism itself, are borrowed from the Canaanites or Kenites; and when it is asked why the Canaanites or Kenites did not reach the same truth that Israel attained, we get no answer. And when we ask what then had Israel to distinguish it, the feeble answer is returned that when Israel (for no reason stated) assumed Jahaveh as their national deity, they also resolved and were told that He only (for no reason assigned) was to be their only God. And when the undoubtedly pure and high conceptions entertained by the prophets are pointed out, and an explanation demanded of their origin, we are told that a "conception" was "absorbed" by the prophets and came out in this purified form; but we get no sufficient account of the faculty that enabled the prophets to absorb this and that, and give forth a product which is entirely unlike the thing absorbed. In the same way no satisfactory account is given of the ascription of law to Moses, and no firm basis for the various Codes. The theory is, again, strong in

details of analysis, but weak in face of a historical event. No explanation is given of the origin of what is declared to be the first of all the Codes. When a great reform of religion such as took place in Josiah's days has to be explained, instead of historical criticism reconstructing an intelligible historical situation, we are shown how a book was constructed which brought it about. Though all the scathing rebukes and denunciations of the prophets up to this time had been powerless to wean the people from their idolatries, the production in some secret conclave of this book, telling unheard-of stories about Moses, and laying down on his authority laws which were then partly impracticable, rouses a whole nation. And again, in the captivity, after the Temple had been destroyed and the people scattered for their sins, the main thing the best of them think about is the gathering together of the ritual practices of the priests, and, instead of being humbled for their transgressions, imagining ever so many great things their nation had been and done in the early ages. Upon the strength of this a colony braves the hardships of a long journey from Babylon to Jerusalem to set up the worship which they had agreed was the right ritual to practise. This falling back at every stage upon the introduction of some new factor, which does not grow out of the history itself, but is made to give a turn to the whole history, is artificial. Jahaveh, introduced from the Kenites, becomes the distinctive deity of Israel. Prophetism imitated from the raving of Canaanites becomes the glory of Israel. Codes of laws, gathered up from a haphazard praxis or devised as reforming schemes, become so sacred that the nation will battle for them as for existence. In short, we are promised the exhibition of a course of development, and at decisive turning-

points the theory of development fails. It may seem at first sight remarkable that there should be so much consensus of critical opinion in regard to these outstanding and testing points of the history. But if we look more closely we shall observe that, after all, the consensus is confined to the underlying postulate, which of course controls all the details. The theory itself is clear and thorough enough, and of course it hangs together as a whole. But it does not hold the parts together, because it does not supply the proper nexus that unites them in an orderly historical development. There must be a bond of a more vital fibre, a force more deeply inherent, which the modern theory has not penetrated to nor unfolded, to account for a religious and spiritual movement, which, looking to the broad field on which it is displayed and the diversified circumstances under which it took place, is nothing short of majestic. The self-styled "higher" criticism is indeed not high enough, or, we should perhaps more appropriately say, not deep enough for the problem before it.

The strongest objection, in fact, to the theory "as a whole" is, that it hardly at all touches the religion round which the whole history properly turns. Superstition there has always been among all peoples, and no doubt there was much superstition mixed up with the popular religion of ancient Israel. But religion is not necessarily superstition, nor does it necessarily flow from it in natural development. Unquestionably there was among the best souls of the nation of Israel in early times—and these may have been a larger proportion of the people than we generally suppose, as the answer to Elijah (1 Kings xix. 18) in his day indicated—a strong current of true religious life, to the fountains of which we must reach, if

we would understand this wonderful history. To this aspect of the subject, however, the modern theory pays far too little regard. Take, for example, the treatment of the book of Psalms now in vogue in the higher circles of criticism. One would have thought that if anywhere the inquirer into the history of religious thought and life would find valuable "sources," it would be in this collection of the sacred and national songs of Israel. But Wellhausen, for example, who boasts that he could understand the history of Israel without the book of the Law, can also dispense with the book of the Psalms. In the "index of passages discussed" appended to his 'History of Israel,' there is only one reference to one psalm (Ps. lxxiii.), which too, of course, is placed very late in date. I think it a positive objection to the theory, not so much that it brings down the bulk of the psalms to post-exilian times, but that it is able to dispense with them as materials for a history of the older religion of Israel, and to relegate them to a time at which, according to its own showing, the religion had taken a more mechanical and formal phase. It is now the fashion to speak of the Psalter as the psalm-book of the second Temple, in the sense, not that it is a collection of older religious compositions brought together by the piety of a later generation, but that they were composed purposely for use in public worship. Thus, by one stroke, the tongue of ancient Israel is struck dumb, as the pen is dashed from its hand, these artless lyrics are deprived of their spontaneousness, and a great gulf is fixed between the few which a niggardly criticism admits to be of early date, and the full volume of devotional song which in many tones was called forth by the shifting situations of olden times. Of course the hypothesis of a low religious stage in pre-exilic

times demands this, but it is an additional difficulty which the theory raises in the way of its own acceptance; for even if the psalms are late, the influence that started and produced them must lie early and must lie deeper than in legal ordinances and formal ceremonies. So far as concerns their higher tone, which is supposed to mark a late date, it is not higher than what we meet with in the very earliest writing prophets. In the glowing periods of these prophets we have unmistakable evidence of the deep religiousness that suffused the minds of those who from the first guided the religious life of the nation. But all that side of the early religious history—and how much is that all!—might almost as well never have existed, for all that the modern historians make of it. The deep spirituality of Hosea, who stands, like the Saviour of mankind weeping over Jerusalem, full of the very love of God; the strong ethical tone of Amos and his enthusiasm for God; the lofty aspirations of Isaiah for righteousness, and his rapt visions of future glory,—these surely are not isolated phenomena in the centuries that rolled over Israel when all that is best in the history was being achieved, but indicate a strong under-current of perennial religious life. Yet for all these, even taken in their isolation, how little sympathy do our modern critical historians exhibit! Whereas Ewald, in a past generation, came to the Old Testament books with a sympathetic spirit, and Delitzsch in our own generation, with a piety pardonable in the circumstances, heard in these prophetic voices the echo, thrown backward over the centuries, of the Gospel of Christ, we get nowadays some dry analysis of the "idea" and the "conception" of each prophet, and a grudging doling out of the attributes of might and holiness in the character of God, and reluctant admissions of nascent

monotheism here and there, but we catch no fire from the prophetic words as they are weighed and measured out in the scales of the critics.[1] These men, whose words are the fittest found even yet to express all that we can think loftiest of God, are represented as groping after the idea of one God, contending for the honour of a deity that is little better than a Chemosh or a Moloch; and when they cease to write and become men of action, they are set before us as moved by paltry motives of expediency, upholding the dignity of their order against the priesthood, or conspiring with them to bring about a masterly movement for the concentration of religious worship directly under their own supervision. Feasts, sacrifices, incomes of the clergy, in such things, and in the centralisation of the worship at Jerusalem, the history of religion is made to consist;[2] but the *heart* of the religion is hardly looked at, or rudely torn out of it.

So that, when all is said and done, the impression on the mind of an unprejudiced reader certainly is that there is more in the religion of Israel than the modern historians are able to see or willing to acknowledge. Let their literary analysis be ever so thorough, one who will read the Old Testament books as he would read any other ancient documents, must remain convinced that justice is not done to them by a criticism which ignores their most

[1] Wellhausen must needs even belittle the impression of sublimity produced by the account of the Creation in the first chapter of Genesis. He is generous enough to admit that "the beginning especially is incomparable." But "chaos being given, all the rest is spun out of it: all that follows is reflection, systematic construction; we can easily follow the calculation from point to point" (Hist. of Israel, p. 298). He could have done it himself in short. Instead of the artless gestures of a child we have the stiff movements of a Dutch doll. But is it the Hebrew writer or the modern critic that is wooden-headed?

[2] See Wellhausen, pp. 13, 27.

characteristic element. The critics object to the Biblical theory that it relies so much on the supernatural: the characteristic feature of their own is the unnatural. The Biblical theory says there was a course of history quite unprecedented, or certainly most extraordinary; the modern theory says that the history was nothing remarkable, but there was quite an unprecedented mode of imagining and writing it. There have to be postulated miracles of a literary and psychological kind, which contradict sound reason and experience as much as any of the physical miracles of the Old Testament transcend them.

Even in what is its strong point, literary analysis, I do not know that the modern theory is very formidable if the underlying historical postulates are not granted. Let us suppose for a moment that it is possible on purely literary grounds to separate different portions of the Pentateuch books, and pronounce them to be from different hands. It is still confessed [1] that the relative positions and dates of these portions cannot be determined from themselves. Only when the theory of the historical development is introduced do the original sources or diverse components fall into the places assigned to them in the scheme. But if the theory of the development can be shown to be so far untenable that what is pronounced by it late may well have been much earlier, then the arrangement and dating of the parts are open to revision. As to the critical process of separating the sources as literary products, I regard it as a matter of secondary importance, so long as we are able, by the help of the prophetic writers, to determine in a general way that the books in their combined form are trustworthy

[1] Wellhausen, History, p. 10.

documents, and that the views they set forth are not unhistorical. It may be open to question, however, whether the separation has not been carried too far, and in a manner somewhat arbitrary and artificial. When we find a real character in flesh and blood in Hebrew history, we find him capable of entertaining more than one idea in his mind, and even sustaining apparently incompatible relations, as Samuel, who offered sacrifice, and yet seems to scout it as useless. I think it is most probable that the men who wrote the component parts of these books were representative and public men, not mere "priests" here or "prophetic men" there. I do not know, indeed, that the main "sources" of the Hexateuch differ more in style or substance among themselves than do the synoptic Gospels. And most certainly there is an overdriving of critical processes in the historical books when narratives are cut up into contradictory parts, because some character in the story is represented as actuated by different motives at different times, or playing parts which either are or seem to be inconsistent.

But let it be granted that the "sources" of the Pentateuch books have been pretty accurately determined, or let the very highest value be given to the results of critical analysis, there is one remark that occurs in regard to them. We have seen good reason for believing that the art of literary composition does not begin about the time of the first writing prophets, but was then well advanced. It seems to me that the existence of these "sources" of the critics proves the same thing and proves more. There they are, combined, at a very early period of literary composition—J and E at least—so inextricably that they cannot be separated, to say nothing of the redaction, whether by the Deuteronomist or another.

Now we are continually being told that in ancient times there was no literary copyright, and that the possessor of a book considered himself entitled to treat it as his own, by adding to it or incorporating his own materials with it; and that in this way we might get such combinations as these books exhibit. It is said also that the earliest writings must have been of a private or personal character — *i.e.*, not stamped with such authority as canonical writings came to possess. Now, when we look at the component parts of the Old Testament writings, as the analysis of criticism exhibits them, there is nothing that strikes us more forcibly than the care that was evidently bestowed in preserving even minute parts of separate documents. It may be, as is generally supposed, that when, *e.g.*, J and E had a passage in common, the redactor who combined them adopted the one and excluded the other; but the obstinate way in which minute fragments, even single words, of the one intrude into the other, where presumably there was some slight divergence or additional detail, and this in the case of all the sources or redactions, leads us to the conclusion that even at that early time when these sources were combined, there was a regard for literary copyright.[1] Whether this is consistent with the idea that these sources were private documents is not very certain. One would think that the writing of the history of the nation on the broad scheme (comparatively) on which these writers proceed, was not left to private and irresponsible men—at least was not undertaken by any or

[1] Horton, in speaking of one so late as the author of the books of Chronicles, says, when he had different authorities before him, he "preferred leaving them unharmonised to tampering in any way with the facts."—Inspiration and the Bible, third edition, p. 160.

every one who cared to do it. We should most naturally look for the authors of such writings, when great writers were rare, among outstanding and responsible men. This whole aspect of the matter would almost lead to the conclusion that the germ of a canon existed much earlier than is generally asserted. Especially if, for J. and E. and the like, we substitute the names of prophets or theocratic men, who guided the nation's religious life and interpreted its history, it will not be so evident that our earlier Scriptures were left to the haphazard emendation of every private hand into which they came.

But now, if the knowledge of God in a pure form is to be placed so far back in history, and made to start with a simple revelation to Abraham, what becomes of development? Well, in the first place, the modern theory also has to postulate a starting-point; and, we have seen, its difficulty is marked when it seeks to place the absolute commencement of a spiritual religion at a late period. But, in the second place, the Biblical theory is more conspicuously a theory of development than the modern one. It makes the advance of the religious idea really an unfolding of a germinal conception, not an advance from one attribute to another, as from might to holiness, but an expansion of one fundamental conception into wider references and application. And it is a development marked by historical stadia. From the Being who made Himself known to the soul of Abraham, and from that time onward was the covenant God of one nation, faithful to His word, even though His people should be unfaithful on their part, we can trace an unbroken development to the God of all the families of mankind. For if He defends His own people from their enemies, and is at the

same time a merciful God to His own, the idea follows, and we see it early, that His enemies, by submitting to Him and casting in their lot with His people, will share in His people's blessings, and thus the God of Israel will become, in fact as well as of right, the God of all. Strictly speaking, the Old Testament writers never got beyond the idea of national religion. Though they perceived that Jahaveh ruled all nations, and acted on strictly moral and just principles towards all, they never conceived that there was no difference between His relation to Israel and His relation to the nations. In point of fact there was a difference, as history has proved. Even in New Testament times, we see how hard it was for the apostle Peter to perceive that God was "no respecter of persons, but that in every nation he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him" (Acts x. 34, 35). St Paul also had to fight hard for the position that "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Cor. vii. 19), and to the last had to contend for the truth that the God whom he preached was not the God of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles. The highest that the Old Testament prophets attained to was an anticipation of a condition of things under which, through Israel, blessing would come to the whole world; it was again an expansion of this when, in the New Testament, the middle wall of partition was broken down, and all who have the faith of Abraham, whether they be his seed or not, shall share in his blessing. The development here is unbroken; and though the history shows, as all history does, action and reaction, yet there is an onward advance from beginning to end.

Thus from Abraham on to the close of national inde-

pendence there was a regular and steady development, the idea of Jahaveh and the conception of what His religion implied undergoing a steady expansion in the prophetic teaching, aided by the political events through which the nation passed. The revival of the time of Ezra was a new starting-point, or, as we may better express it, the course of development had come round by a wide cycle to a new starting-point; for all historical movement is of this kind, in cycles which come back again upon themselves and follow apparently the same path, though on a higher plane. What happened in Ezra's time was this: An attempt was made, on the basis of the experience of the past, to live the national life over again under new conditions. What had been already achieved was gathered up; the national life, instead of having primarily a promise of a future, fed itself on the recollections of the past; it closed around the results of the former prophetic activity, and sought to conserve what had been attained, as the starting-point for a new round of experience. There is in the plant a similar cycle of life: the flower blossoms and then decays; but before it has fallen, it has developed the seed which is to be the life of a coming season; and though we may think that the plant has completed its period of life, this is not so if it has matured the seed which has vitality in itself for future growth. The hard and dry seed-pod is not so attractive an object as the fair blossoming flower, but it not only is the result of the past, but has also promise for the future. And if, to preserve the figure, the period of the Talmud exhibits men amusing themselves at play with dry peas, yet these seeds were not dead, and many even in the Talmudic period recognised their vitality. And when, finally, the fulness of the

time was come, the seeds which had fallen on dry ground shot forth with new and more beautiful life: the truths reached by men of old time, which had been treated as so many dogmas or formulæ, were seen to be truths endowed with perennial life. The teaching of the prophets, and the fond beliefs of the people, that Jahaveh would ever be Israel's God, were illustrated in a new and striking manner in Him who was raised up an horn of salvation in the house of David, and the anticipations of the time when Gentiles should come to the light of Israel, were fulfilled when the wall of partition was broken down, and it was shown, in the light of the Gospel, that Abraham was father of all that believe, whether they be Jews or Gentiles.

But M. Renan objects: This makes the religion of Israel a thing that has no beginning—a thing as old as the world—a supposition which, from his point of view, is not for a moment to be entertained. And from him and from others we hear the reiterated appeal to "primitive peoples," "rudimentary ideas," and so forth, with the implication that the progress of Israel's religious life must be made to square with the progress found in other nations. To all which our simple reply is—In point of fact it was not the same; the modern theorists themselves are bound to admit as much within the sphere of which they say we have authentic information. And there is the other fact, patent in history, that other primitive peoples, and even peoples of the same Semitic race, never got to the stage, or anything approaching the stage, that the Hebrews reached. In view of these plain facts in the world's history, it is simply trifling to insist upon making Israel's history square with that of all other peoples. The Oriental of the present day has a very expressive answer

to all such arguments. He simply extends his hand, and says, "See; are the fingers of the hand all of one length?" In the matter of religion we are not to be guided by the degree of "culture" to which a nation has attained, or justified in speaking of early and late at all. The Egyptians and Assyrians were far in advance of the Israelites in civilisation and outward culture, but they are not to be compared with them in the sphere of religion. Renan himself has pointed out how the simple nomad is far in advance of the settled inhabitant of the city in religious experience. The history of the world would seem in a striking manner to confirm the Biblical statements that man cannot by searching find out God; that the world by wisdom knew not God. While the most acute philosophers and thinkers of Greece were reasoning about these things, the simple-minded Hebrews had reached a firm position from which they never receded, and from which the whole thinking world, as from a starting-point, has had to advance.[1] It is all very well for us *now*—when the light shines—to formulate our arguments for the existence and character of God; for we know what we want to prove. But the fact that reasoners by reason did not succeed in proving it till the Hebrew race had made it known to the world, and the other fact that *they* did not reach it by a process of reasoning or reflection, or adding on of one attribute to another—these facts show that such a knowledge is given with more direct force, and in a more complete form. What seems, in fact, hard and laborious to us with our logical categories and subjective processes, seems to have come instinctively to the Abrahamic race; and even Stade has admitted that if there was not precisely an instinct of monotheism in the

[1] Bredenkamp, Gesetz u. Propheten, p. 13.

Hebrews, they, above all others, showed a predisposition to it.

In this connection it is interesting to recall an incident mentioned by F. W. Newman,[1] from his own experience as a missionary. "While we were at Aleppo," he says, "I one day got into religious discourse with a Mohammedan carpenter, which left on me a lasting impression. Among other matters, I was peculiarly desirous of disabusing him of the current notion of his people, that our Gospels are spurious narratives of late date. I found great difficulty of expression; but the man listened to me with great attention, and I was encouraged to exert myself. He waited patiently till I had done, and then spoke to the following effect: 'I tell you, sir, how the case stands. God has given to you English a great many good gifts. You make fine ships, and sharp penknives, and good cloth and cottons; and you have rich nobles and brave soldiers; and you write and print many learned books (dictionaries and grammars): all this is of God. But there is one thing that God has withheld from you and has revealed to us; and that is, the knowledge of the true religion, by which one may be saved.'" Newman adds: "When he had thus ignored my argument (which was probably quite unintelligible to him) and delivered his simple protest, I was silent and at the same time amused. But the more I thought it over, the more instruction I saw in the case." For my own part, I have much sympathy with the opinion expressed by the Moslem carpenter. He is a type of many that are to be found in the humbler ranks of society in the East at the present day, who are little qualified to follow a connected argument, but to whom religious conceptions of a high order come as a matter of course. Such men, doubt-

[1] Phases of Faith, second edition, 1853, p. 32 f.

less, were those who wrote and who read many of the books of the Old Testament; and hence the books themselves, though subjected to the most harassing criticism, and characterised as "spurious narratives of late date," smile at all such criticism, and give forth with confidence their testimony to a faith, which is independent of time, and indifferent to modes of literary composition.

Our investigations have been confined to the history of Israel as *a nation*, and the conclusion I have come to is that the history, as told by the Bible historians, is credible in all the essential points at which we have the means of testing it. The Biblical view carries back the national life and the national religion to Abraham, and so far as we are able to check the accounts, we have found that without this assumption the history cannot be explained. In other words, from the 12th chapter of Genesis onwards, we conclude that we have a credible and trustworthy account of the leading events and crises of the history of Israel. As to the antecedent eleven chapters of Genesis, the matters therein treated do not fall properly within the scope of our present inquiry. They do not constitute part of the history of Israel, strictly speaking, though in the Biblical writings they are made to lead up to it and give a basis for it. These accounts of primitive and primeval times, if we place them, simply as ancient documents, side by side with the early traditions and cosmogonies of other nations, are, as has been universally admitted, characterised by a sobriety, purity, and loftiness of conception which render them altogether unique. If we should set them down as merely the attempts on the part of the Hebrew writers to give an account of origins of which no historical record was in their hands, merely the consolidated form of legends and

myths handed on from prehistoric times, we cannot but recognise the singular line that myth-making took in this particular case, as distinguished from the cases of polytheistic Semitic and non-Semitic races. Such myths, if they are to be so described, are not born in a day; even if the writer of the earliest of them is set down as late as the eighth or ninth century before Christ, the folk-lore, if you will, of his people was of quite a unique character before it could furnish such materials; and the writer of them must already have formulated to himself, to say the least, a very definite philosophy of history, and had a much broader conception of the world and of its relation to God, than we should expect from one in the primitive stage of religion. As compared with the earliest formulated accounts of creation and primeval times contained in Assyrian literature, they are pervaded by an entirely different spirit, emancipated from bonds of polytheistic notions, and moving altogether on a higher plane. If we find, as have been found, correspondences of a remarkable kind in the Hebrew and other early accounts of the creation, and so forth, we must not, as has too often been the practice, jump to the conclusion that everything which Hebrew literature and tradition have in common with those of other nations must be borrowed by the Hebrews. Why should the Hebrews borrow from every side, and yet retain something so clearly distinguishing them from each and all of the others? Why should we not admit a common primeval tradition, when it is thus attested by independent witnesses? Nay, seeing that the Hebrew tradition, at the very earliest point at which we can seize it, is purer and loftier than any other, why should it be at all incredible that in that race, from pre-Abrahamic times and in the lands from which the faith

of Abraham was disseminated, there were found purer conceptions of God and deeper intuitions into His character and operations than we find elsewhere—glimmerings of a purer faith which had elsewhere become obscured by polytheistic notions and practices? Do not the results of the study of comparative religion tend to show that even polytheism is an aberration from a simpler conception, and that the lowest forms of nature-religion point to a belief in a Being whose character always transcends the forms in which the untutored mind tries to represent Him, and is not summed up in all their attempts to give it expression? That being so, why should it be a thing incredible that in one quarter, a quarter which in the clear light of history is found to stand sharply defined from its surroundings, the souls of the best should have kept themselves above these degradations, and nursed within themselves the higher, purer, more primary conception; and that this should have taken shape in the faith of Abraham, or, if we state it otherwise, formed the basis on which the purer faith of Abraham was reared? This will not seem incredible to any who believe that there is but *one* God, and that He has been the same from the beginning. It is only a statement in another form of St Paul's words, that God has never left Himself without witness; and it is quite in keeping, I believe, with the best results of the comparative study of religions.

In the foregoing chapters, I have carefully abstained from making any appeal to the authority of New Testament Scriptures. The first and fundamental question is, not whether the modern theory agrees with our Christian religion and our Confession, but whether it agrees with sound sense and sober reason. If the theory is to be held as proved on these solid grounds, our views must be

adjusted in regard to it. I cannot help adding, however, that if the postulates and methods of this kind of criticism are to be admitted, a good many other things besides our views of Old Testament history will require to be re-adjusted. The question may be put to a good many who seem disposed to accept the modern critical treatment of the Old Testament, whether they are prepared to allow the same processes to be applied to the New. I would seriously ask those Christians who regard Stade's 'Geschichte' as a successful exhibition of the religious history of Israel, to ponder the application of the *same principles* of criticism to the life of Jesus Christ in the second volume of that work. So far as I can see, the arguments used in the one field may be employed equally well in the other, and the Gospel history be critically reconstructed out of the tendencies and views of the second century, just as the account of the pre-prophetic religion given by the Hebrew writers is made the result of the projection backward of later ideas.

Just because the issues in this controversy are so far-reaching, is it necessary to meet the critical view on its own ground, and to examine the foundation on which it rests. Questions are involved that lie much deeper than those of the verbal inspiration or the so-called "inerrancy" of Scripture. It seems to me vain to talk of the inspiration and authority of books till we are sure that they are credible and honest compositions, giving us a firm historical basis on which to rest. My whole argument has been to show that, examined by the light which they themselves furnish, these books are trustworthy documents; that the compositions which are undoubted and accepted give their testimony to those that are questioned or rejected; that the books as they lie before us, so far

as they can be tested by the only tests in our possession, and making all allowance for the ordinary conditions of human composition and transmission of books, give us a fair and credible account of what took place in the history and religious development of Israel. If that point is allowed to be in a fair way established, I leave the argument for inspiration and authority to take care of itself. The picture which the books present, if it is admitted to be in any sense an adequate representation of fact, will probably be sufficient to convince ordinary Christian people that in ancient Israel there was a divine control of events, a divine guidance of the best spirits of the nation, a divine plan in the unfolding of the history, which we may sum up by saying there was a divinely guided development, or, as it has been expressed,[1] that the history itself is inspired. How far such a description, in any specific sense, may be given of the history as it is represented by the theory I have been combating, I leave its advocates to determine. I should think, however, that that is the very *minimum* of any theory of inspiration worthy of the name. I should think, moreover, that those who do regard the history of Israel as divinely guided and inspired in a sense altogether different from other ancient history, instead of underrating as a vague or negative result such a conclusion as it has been my endeavour to establish on the bare ground of historical criticism, ought to rejoice if, with even a degree of probability, it can be made out. M. Renan would indeed have us believe that the idea which animated ancient Israel, and was carried over into Christianity, is played out, having received its death-blow at the French Revolution, when certain thinkers came to the conclusion that

[1] Horton, Inspiration and the Bible, p. 171.

there was no Providence controlling the events of man's world, no God who is to be the judge of man's actions.[1] Instead of hailing with pleasure such an emancipation of the human spirit, we ought gladly to welcome any help that comes to the aid of faith in such a God as the patriarchs and prophets are represented as making known—a God whose revelation of Himself has been advancing with brighter radiance, till it culminated in the manifestation of His Son Jesus Christ, who was the "light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of His people Israel." Such a faith as Old Testament prophets possessed has been the blessing and the guide of the best of mankind in their achievement of the best up till this hour; such a faith is more than ever needed just at the present moment, to save the human race from losing respect for itself, and to rekindle hope and aspiration for the future. The choice has to be made, in the last resort, between such a faith and "the divine pride of man in himself," which, we are told, is to be "the radical foundation of the new religion."[2] And even the volatile Frenchman himself has said: "It is not impossible that, wearied with the repeated bankruptcies of liberalism, the world may yet again become Jewish and Christian."[3]

[1] Souvenirs d'Enfance et de Jeunesse, p. 337; Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, tome i. pp. 27, 40, 41.

[2] Walt Whitman, Democratic Vistas (Camelot Series), p. 65.

[3] Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, tome i. p. vii.

NOTES.

Note I. p. 7. — English readers naturally expect that scholars should be able, by mere linguistic features, to arrange the Old Testament books in chronological order; and find it difficult to understand how, in the matters of language and style, there should be so little appreciable distinction between books dating centuries apart. That the fact is so, is sufficiently proved by the various dates assigned by different critical scholars to the same compositions. What used to be regarded as the earliest of the (large) components of the Pentateuch, is now by the prevailing school made the latest, and the linguistic features have not been considered a bar to either view (see p. 42). The uniformity of the language of the Old Testament is partly explained by the fact that the ancient mode of writing only the consonants did not provide for the preservation of those variations in vowel-sounds which usually mark the history of languages; and when, at a late period, a system of vowel-points was adopted, a uniformity in this respect would be the result. The English reader must not, however, conclude that there is no difference observable between early and late productions. The books of Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah betray their later date by the presence of the so-called Chaldee portions; and the book of Ecclesiastes, as Delitzsch has said, must be placed late, else there is no history of the Hebrew language at all. The books of Chronicles indicate their lateness even by the matter. Still, in the great mass of the Hebrew literature there are no sure linguistic landmarks denoting definite literary periods. It must be admitted that in this, as in other re-

spects, the East is more stationary than the West; and it is therefore somewhat misleading to compare long periods of our own history with the same number of *years* in Hebrew history (as is done, *e.g.*, by Horton, in 'Inspiration and the Bible,' third edition, p. 143). A modern Arabic author will write in the style of an ancient classic, without subjecting himself to the charge of pedantry; and the uniformity of the style of Assyrian documents is remarkable. When once a certain style for a certain subject is fixed, it tends to stereotype itself; and one author may be master of more than one style. At all events, the determination of separate authorship does not, as a rule, go far to the determination of date. Cf. below, Note XXVI.

Note II. p. 21.—M. Renan's estimate of the historical sciences, to which his life has been devoted, is not very high: "Little conjectural sciences, which are unmade as fast as they are made, and which will be neglected a hundred years hence." With his sneer at the "ugly little Jew" (St Paul) who was unable to understand the goddess whom Renan on the Acropolis addressed, may be contrasted the declaration of Heine in his 'Confessions': "Formerly I had no special admiration for Moses, probably because the spirit of Hellenism was dominant within me, and I could not pardon in the lawgiver of the Jews his intolerance of all types and plastic representations. . . . I see now that the Greeks were only handsome youths, while the Jews were always men, powerful, indomitable men." See 'Wit, Wisdom, and Pathos from the Prose of Heinrich Heine,' by Snodgrass, second edition, p. 256 f.

Note III. p. 23. — Tiele in his 'Kompendium der Religionsgeschichte,' § 3, thus lays down the fundamental lines of the whole subject: It is probable for various reasons that *primitive* religion, which has left but few traces, was followed by a prevailing period of animism, which is still found in the so-called *nature-religions* (or, as he prefers to call them, "polydemonistic-magical tribal religions"), and which, at a still early period among civilised peoples, was developed into *polytheistic national religions*, resting on traditional teaching. At a later time there arose out of polytheism, here and there, *nomistic* religions, or religious communities based on a law or sacred writing. In these polytheism was more or less overcome by *pantheism* or *monotheism*, in the last of which are found the roots of the *world-religions*. All this, as is pointed out by Tiele's French translator (Maurice Vernes, L'histoire des Religions, p. 42), is

very much a repetition of Auguste Comte's famous trilogy, fetishism, polytheism, monotheism; with this difference, that Tiele and his followers regard monotheism as a permanent religion, while Comte and his school regard it as destined to give place to positive philosophy. It is plain, moreover, that, starting with a determination of what is to be found, the inquirer will be strongly tempted to find it, at the expense, it may be, of sober interpretation of facts.

Note IV. pp. 28, 43.—Writers of the critical school are in the habit of attacking what they call the "traditional theory." With this, however, we need not concern ourselves, except in so far as it is found in the Biblical writers. The O. T. writers have a theory, and it is enough that we examine it, especially as the advanced critics tell us plainly that it is erroneous. (See Kuenen, National Religions, p. 69 f.) Whether Robertson Smith gives an exact statement of the traditional theory (O. T. in Jewish Church, p. 208 ff.) I am not prepared to say. I agree with him, however, that the position assigned to the prophets, in the theory as he sketches it, is not consistent with the declarations of the prophets themselves (p. 216). My whole contention is, that the Biblical writers do not bind us to any theory or view of the mode of composition of books, whatever may have been "traditionally" inferred or taken for granted in the matter; but as to the sequence of events, and the religious significance of events, their language is plain and emphatic. It is with that language, and the view it expresses, not with traditional interpretations of it, that we have to deal.

Note V. p. 35.—Vatke, from whom Wellhausen "gratefully acknowledges himself to have learned best and most" (Hist. of Israel, p. 13), says that Moses must be measured by his time, and that it is impossible that an individual should rise suddenly from a lower to a higher stage and raise a whole people with him; so, though an individual may out of weakness fall back to a lower level (as to idol and image worship), yet this is impossible in the case of a whole people, if the consciousness of the unity of God was actually alive. As to the age of Moses, according to whose standard the lawgiver is to be measured, Vatke denied to it even the knowledge of writing (Bibl. Theol., 179-183). Ewald, on the other hand, speaking of the time of Moses, says: "A new power was in that distant age set in motion in the world, whose pulsations vibrated through the whole of antiquity," &c. (Hist. of Israel, Eng. transl., vol. ii. p. 169); and

F. C. Baur says that Mosaism must ever be regarded as a great religious reform, a renewing and restoration of a purer religion, periodically obscured and threatened with a still deeper obscuration (in Studien und Kritiken for 1832).

Note VI. p. 44.—The classical passage in the Talmud (Baba Bathra, 14 b.) contains really all that the rabbins had of tradition on the subject of the authorship of the Old Testament books; and it is so obscurely expressed that it is evident the tradition, whatever it was, was mixed up with crude guesses of their own. The passage is given by Strack in the Herzog-Plitt Encyklopädie, vol. vii., art. "Kanon des Alten Testaments." It is also given in English, and discussed by Briggs, Bibl. Study, p. 175 ff.

Note VII. p. 47.—During the Egyptian war of 1882 there was a newspaper edited by an intimate associate of Arabi, and circulated widely among the *fellahîn* and those favourable to Arabi's cause. It gave most circumstantial and minute details of his operations and glowing accounts of his victories. The readers of this paper believed, for example, that a midshipman who lost his way on the sands somewhere near Kefr Dawár, and was taken prisoner, was the admiral of the British fleet; and their belief was encouraged by the attention bestowed on the prisoner, and the state in which he was made to live in one of the palaces. They also believed that Arabi's troops had many successful engagements with the British; and, as a native writer says, had the sum of the British reported as killed been added up, it would have amounted to ten times their whole actual number (Scottish Review, April 1887, p. 386). A copy of this paper, dated a day or so before the battle of Tel-el-Kebir, was picked up in the trenches by a British soldier, and used as letter-paper to write to his friends at home. I had the good fortune to see it, and I found it full of the most extravagant accounts of the doings of the rebel army on the very eve of its discomfiture. What would a future historian make of a complete file of this paper?

Note VIII. p. 53.—It is not necessary for us to enter into critical questions as to the composition and the original "sources" of the various books; but a brief statement of the chief critical conclusions and designations is here desirable. The oldest of all the historical authorities recognised by critics are those songs, or poetical pieces, which presumably had their rise in connection with stirring

events, and were, in the first instance, handed down orally. The song of Deborah, says Stade, bears traces of having been composed under the immediate impression of the victory it celebrates, and it is usually appealed to as one of the oldest sources of historical information. The Hexateuch (*i.e.*, the six books Genesis to Joshua) is regarded as one great composite work, within which several large component parts (to say nothing of redactional matter) of different dates are distinguishable. The book of Deuteronomy may be set aside as a part by itself with well-marked features. There remain two larger sources, capable again of minor subdivision. The first of these in historical order is a story-book, now usually designated (after Wellhausen) J E, having been originally two books, one (J) characterised by the use of the name Jahaveh, the other (E) by the use of the name Elohim, the former belonging probably to the southern kingdom, the latter to the northern. They are both of prophetical or popular character. Wellhausen's school makes J the earlier, placing it in the middle of the ninth century B.C., while E would fall not later than 750 B.C. Both of these may have incorporated older sources, and may both have been originally of larger compass; they are now so closely joined together that a separation of them in their original entireness may be considered impossible. This combined source J E is often designated the Jehovist, to distinguish it from J, the simple Jahvist. The other great component part of the Hexateuch used to be called the Grundschrift or Fundamental Writing, because it was regarded as the earliest main source, a sort of backbone about which the other parts were grouped. Its first portion is the opening chapter of Genesis, and in the remainder of that book those portions that are headed "these are the generations," &c., belong to it, and hence Ewald called it the "Book of Origins." It was also called the "Older Elohist," to distinguish it from the Elohistic story-book, now called E. The main portion of it lies in the middle books, particularly in Leviticus, and from this part, which is its most striking feature, this source is now usually denoted by P.—*i.e.*, Priestly source. Wellhausen thinks that the kernel of this work was, what he designates Q (=*quatuor*, four), a work containing the four covenants (Gen. i. 28-30, ix. 1-17, xvii.; Exod. vi. 2, ff.) This great source is now regarded, not as the underlying fundamental document, but, so to speak, the final encircling framework, which held all the others together in a systematic scheme, and in date it is declared to be exilic. Some critics recognise more, some less, pre-existing material within its own proper domain;

and it need not be said, the views as to the processes by which the whole composite Hexateuch grew to its present form, vary considerably (see chap. vi. p. 139 ff.) As to the other historical books, the books of Kings bear on their face that they were composed in the time of the exile (whatever earlier materials they may embody). In 1 Kings vi.-viii., Wellhausen recognises marks of the influence of the (still later) Priestly Code (Hist. of Israel, p. 280). The book of Judges, besides an introduction (i. 1–ii. 5) and an appendix (xvii.-xxi.), is made up of a number of stories, recounting the exploits of local heroes. These stories, however, are set in a framework, said to be from a different hand, explaining in stereotyped phrase how the various oppressions came about, how the deliverer was raised up, and how long the effects of the deliverance lasted. The chapters at the end (xix.-xxi.) Stade calls a "tendency romance," fully in accord with the Priestly source (Gesch., i. p. 71). Wellhausen, however (Hist., p. 237), does not make this portion so late as P. C., with the exception of one reference to the "congregation," and the mention of Phinehas. So he says (Hist., p. 256) that 1 Sam. vii., viii., x. 17 f., xii., betray a close relationship with those chapters of the book of Judges.

Note IX. p. 77.—The hieroglyphic system is found in perfection on the monuments of the 18th and 19th dynasties—*i.e.*, earlier than the exodus. But by that time it was a venerable system; for remains of monuments from even the 4th dynasty exhibit a character essentially identical with that found in the inscriptions of Thothmes and Rameses. Budge, in speaking of the cover of the sarcophagus of Menkau Ra (or Mycerinus), of the 4th dynasty (dated by Brugsch, 3633 B.C.), says: There is little difference between the shape of the hieroglyphics of those days and those of a much later date; and however far we may go back, we never come to an inscription belonging to a period in which we can see that the Egyptians were learning to write (Dwellers on the Nile, p. 63). In 1847 was published by Prisse a facsimile of a papyrus found in a tomb of the 11th dynasty (*i.e.*, some centuries earlier than Moses). Old as it is, it is a copy of an original work composed by a writer of the 5th dynasty; and, to crown all, the original author, who is an old man, laments over the good old times that are gone. A translation of Pentaur's poem by Professor Lushington is contained in Records of the Past, first ser., vol. ii. p. 65 ff. Comp. Budge, Dwellers on the Nile, chap. v. It is interesting to note that it exhibits the

system of parallelism which is so characteristic of Hebrew poetry, and has other resemblances to the lyrical and prophetical style of the Old Testament.

Note X. p. 116.—How very early the Messianic expectation had taken a precise form may be gathered from the way Amos speaks of the "day of Jahaveh" (v. 18-20). This expression, which appears so prominently throughout prophetic literature, was evidently by his time in common use to denote "a good time coming." The polemic of the prophet implies this, as it also teaches the fundamental conception of the "cycle" of history to which reference is made above, p. 117.

Note XI. p. 124.—Robertson Smith says: "That the division of Israel into twelve tribes did not assume its present shape till after the conquest of Canaan, is recognised by most recent inquirers" (Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia, p. 219). Stade tells us that no historical recollection goes back to the time of the entrance of the Israelites into Western Palestine (Geschichte, i. p. 147); that there were never twelve tribes at one and the same time, but sometimes more, sometimes fewer, and that only by artificial means was the number twelve made out (a number found in the similar legends of other peoples), either by leaving out Levi, or by making Ephraim and Manasseh one. The system, he says, is due to the priests, and grew up at the sanctuaries to confirm the general system of patriarchal legends (p. 145). We may conjecture, he says, that a system once prevailed, according to which the tribes were represented as the *wives* of Jacob, for the names Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, Bilhah, are to be taken as names of Hebrew tribes. Independent of this there must have been a genealogy representing the tribes as *sons*, as is apparent from the fact that Leah is just another form of Levi; but the legendary cycle which knew the tribe of Levi in the form of Leah, wife of Jacob, knew nothing of the legend which represented it as Levi, the son of Jacob, and *vice versâ* (p. 146). Moreover, the principle of genealogy must have crossed other systems of division, particularly the geographical system, by which tribes contiguous in situation were represented as consanguineous. Yet, after allowing himself all this latitude and choice of explanations, Stade cannot, *e.g.*, account for the fact that Reuben, an insignificant tribe, was made the firstborn (unless, perhaps, as he suggests, it was just *because* this was an insignificant tribe, put forth, so to speak, as a

neutral-coloured figure-head to allay the jealousies of the two great rival tribes, Judah and Ephraim). Nor can he explain why Zebulon and Issachar (northern tribes) are grouped with Judah under Leah, and Asher (west) with Gad (east) under Zilpah. It seems also an extraordinary statement to make, that the circles which knew of Levi and Leah as the son and wife respectively of Jacob, knew nothing of the legendary beliefs of one another; for one would suppose that if the tribal genealogies were preserved anywhere, it would be in the tribe concerned; and yet one part of the tribe, on this supposition, would not know what the other part thought of themselves. It seems to me, that to place the formation of all this legendary matter, as Stade does, in the time of the divided monarchy (p. 147), is not justifiable in the face of the song of Deborah, nor consistent with his own position stated elsewhere (p. 396), that the monarchical system, by concentrating power, struck at the religious system on which tribal formation rests, not to speak of the opposition of the Jahaveh religion to the same ideas. In other words, the system requires longer time to grow, and presupposes a much more primitive condition of society than his assumption implies. Much more may this be said of the explanation, favoured by Robertson Smith, of the tribal system by the belief and practice of totemism, on the ground of the animal names of some of the tribes (Kinship, &c., *l. c.*) The last-named writer claims to have pointed out that the name Sarah or Sarai corresponds as closely with Israel as Leah does with Levi; and argues hence that, as Abraham was originally a Judæan hero, we have an explanation how Sarah (=Israel) was Abraham's sister before she came to be called his wife and the mother of Israel and Judah alike (ibid., Note XI. to chap. i., p. 257). The great difficulty is to find *room* for the development that all this implies within the firm historical limits prescribed by our written documents. The personality of the patriarchs, as tribal heads, is not inconsistent with a growth of tribes by accretion, as modern Arab practice shows. The Biblical theory, placing a long period between the patriarchs and the exodus, allows room for this; but Stade does not, by ascribing the tribal formation and the growth of the legends to the times succeeding the invasion of Canaan. As to a tribe not knowing its father, as he asserts, see an article by Curtiss in Expositor, third series, vol. vi. p. 328 f. Stade's assertion that no historical recollection goes back to the time of the entrance into Canaan, is met by the concurrent testimony of all the sources, and

the clear voice of the earliest writing prophets, to the effect that Israel came out of Egypt.

Note XII. p. 127.—Yet the only passage in which Abraham appears as a warrior (Gen. xiv., in which the rescue of Lot is described) is relegated by Wellhausen and Kuenen to post-exilic times, and declared to be quite unhistorical. The chapter is a veritable *crux* for modern criticism; it will not allow itself to be classed with any of the main sources, and so Kautzsch and Socin print it in a type by itself (Die Genesis, mit äusserer Unterscheidung der Quellenschriften). Wellhausen declares that it may be described, like Melchizedec, as "without father, without mother, without genealogy." Critics of a more moderate type (as Schrader, Dillmann, and Kittel) regard it as an old independent piece (perhaps borrowed from a native Palestinian source) taken up by E. To which Wellhausen replies that this is the last document to which it should be assigned, since in E Abraham is represented as a "Muslim" and a prophet, but never a warrior. Neither, says he, does the glorification of Jerusalem (the southern sanctuary) suit E, a northern story-teller. Most probably, he concludes, the final redactor who united J E with Q, took up this recital, which had no connection with the antecedent and subsequent context (Composition des Hexateuchs, pp. 26, 310). So Kuenen calls it a post-exilic version of Abram's life, a Midrash (Hexateuch, sect. 16).

Note XIII. p. 133.—H. G. Tomkins, in his 'Studies on the Times of Abraham' (Bagster, 1878), has brought together much interesting matter, drawn from recent archæological research. Reference may be made also to Deane's 'Abraham; His Life and Times,' in the "Men of the Bible" Series. It is time that an extreme criticism, which will persist in representing Israel as groping its way out of the most primitive ideas, while civilisation prevailed around them, should bend to the force of facts which are multiplying every day. What has been done in the field of Homeric studies should not be without its lesson to Biblical students.

Note XIV. p. 171.—Robertson Smith (Religion of Semites, first series, p. 92 ff.) has an ingenious discussion of the original signification of *baal*, in which he relies much on the Arabic expression (baal land), which denotes land nourished by subterranean waters.

Whether his conclusion be right or not, it is evident that a good deal must have happened before a god under the earth beneath became the chief god in the heaven above; and also that by the time we reach the stage of conception of the earliest Hebrew writing (not to say language), in which "baal means the master of a house, the owner of a field, cattle, or the like," we are very far indeed from the original Semitic conception, if, indeed, that order of development took place at all. In this very learned work there are too many sudden leaps from primitive notions of Semitic peoples to such an advanced stage of thought as is represented by the prophets. In my opinion, the work would have been as valuable a contribution to our knowledge of the *common* Semitic religion, and much less confusing and inconsequent, had the author not proceeded on the assumption that the theory of the history of Israel set forth by Wellhausen and Kuenen is established, or, as he states the matter, that the researches of writers of that school have "carried this inquiry to a point where nothing of vital importance for the historical study of the Old Testament religion still remains uncertain" (Pref., p. vii.) The precariousness of the philological argument, so much employed by him, is seen in the fact that expressions illustrating what are claimed as primitive beliefs are found as frequently in undoubtedly late as in early writers. In the Archæological Review (vol. iii., No. 3, 1889) there is an article on Totemism by Jos. Jacobs, who comes to the conclusion that, although not only certain names of Edomite and even Israelite tribes, and also prohibitions of food, family feasts, and so forth, possibly allow the inference of pre-existing totemism, there cannot be a thought of "its actual existence in historic times." And it is with historic times that we are concerned.

Note XV. p. 172. — The name Elohim, which is a plural form, has been taken by many to prove that polytheism was the original belief of the Hebrews. Baudissin (Studien zur Semit. Religionsgesch., Heft I. p. 55 ff.) says that the plural designation of God can only have arisen through the ascription to One of all the powers that resided in different deities. To which Baethgen (Beiträge zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte, p. 132 ff. and p. 297) objects that this is to give to the word an origin in pantheism, of which we have no trace in any Old Testament writer; and that if the God of the Israelites were only the sum of all other gods, he could not be set over against them nor over them. As to the idea that the plural form may have been a summing up of all the gods or divine powers

which *Israel* acknowledged, he objects that, in that case, we should have expected to find traces of the names of such other supposed gods, and also to find a singular noun to denote one of the Elohim. The singular word Eloah, which at all events is poetical and rare, he supposes to be a later formation from the plural which was in common use. Max Müller tells us (Selected Essays, vol. ii. p. 414) that no language forms a plural before a singular; but it cannot be denied that in this instance the singular form is little used, and the plural word is used not only to denote the "gods" collectively of the nations, but even to denote any one of these (see Judges xi. 24; 1 Sam. v. 7; 1 Kings xi. 5; 2 Kings i. 2, 3, 6, 16; Isa. xxxvii. 38) as well as the one God of Israel. Baethgen emphasises the striking fact that Israel, from whom in any case monotheism came, is the only Semitic people which employs this plural form of the divine name, whereas all the other Semitic nations have a singular name for deity, even though they were polytheists (ib., p. 139). If the name did not indicate from the beginning a plurality of majesty or of attributes, it can at most only be taken as a proof of primeval or primitive polytheism; but it cannot be taken as a proof of polytheism after the time of Abraham. Robertson Smith is inclined to believe that the idea underlying the plural Elohim is that of "vague plurality in the conception of the Godhead as associated with special spots, . . . and that not in the sense of a definite number of clearly individualised deities, but with the same indefiniteness as characterises the conception of the *jinn*" (Religion of the Semites, first series, p. 426). This seems to be the sense attached to the word by M. Renan, who describes the Elohim as "myriads of active beings very analogous to the 'spirits' of savages, living, translucid, inseparable in some sort the one from the other, not having distinct proper names like the Aryan gods" (Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, i. p. 30). If this be the original sense attached to the name, it is not the sense as given by the Biblical writers to their national deity within the times of which we speak; or if the Israelites at the time of the prophets or from the time of Moses believed in the existence of such beings as are here described, they evidently ranked them as very inferior to the national God.

Note XVI. p. 182.—The expression "the Lord of hosts" (Jahaveh Çebaoth) is found in a double sense in the Old Testament writings. The "hosts," in the one case, are the armies of Israel (Exod. vii. 4, xii. 41, 51; compare 1 Sam. xvii. 45) whom Jahaveh leads to

victory ; and this use is found in the early historical books, having apparently arisen or been stimulated by the military experiences of the early history. In the prophets, however (see, *e.g.*, Hos. xii. 5), we see that the expression was no longer, or no longer simply, limited in reference to armies, but included the heavenly host, the stars and angels. So the LXX. often render by the word παντοκράτωρ. (See art. Zebaoth in Herzog-Plitt, Realencykl., vol. xvii. p. 427.) Sayce's remark might give the impression that the latter use is the more original, and some have concluded that this reference is primitive. Against this view, however, has to be set the fact that the expression seems to have come into use in connection with military exploits. Kautzsch has pointed out (in Stade's Zeitschrift für Alttest. Wissenschaft, 1886, p. 17) that in the connections in which it occurs in the early historical books, it either is closely associated with the ark, the symbol of Jahaveh's leadership, or otherwise has a warlike reference. König has also pointed out (Hauptprobleme, p. 50) that the host of heaven is denoted by the singular word, not by the plural Çebaoth. In the prophetic (and as he concludes later) use, this plural designation embraces both the earthly and the heavenly hosts.

Note XVII. p. 186.—For a thorough-going treatment of the Old Testament on the mythological method, nothing can surpass the work of Goldziher (Mythology among the Hebrews, translated by Russell Martineau), who explains the characters in Genesis and Judges almost uniformly as sky-myths. I do not think that the myth of the dawn is now taken so seriously as it used to be. The temptation, however, seems to be strong with some minds to look for an ancient mythology underlying the primeval or even the patriarchal history. It is well known that old heathen deities survive under the guise of heroes and mythical ancestors, and it is therefore quite legitimate to examine the names and records relating to those earliest times, to see whether they rest on such a mythical basis. We can only here refer to attempts that have been made in this direction. A summary statement will be found in Baethgen's Beiträge zur Semitischen Religionsgeschichte, p. 147 ff. The conclusion to which he comes is, that any speciousness which at first sight appears in the identification of antediluvian or patriarchal names with faded deities disappears on closer inspection, either because the supposed deities are not otherwise traceable in Semitic religion, or because the names are susceptible of a much simpler

explanation, or because the explanations given break down at the decisive point. As to the story of Samson, which affords such ample scope to the advocates of the sun-myth (Steinthal, Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie, 1862, ii. p. 129 ff., translated in Goldziher's work), it has always seemed to me that the mythological features are too strongly marked for the period at which Samson is placed—*i.e.*, he is surrounded, in the period of the Judges, by characters so thoroughly human, that he would be a glaring literary anachronism as a pure sun-myth. It may be that some traits of the story are coloured by folk-lore (though, on the other hand, there are others that will not be constrained into mythology by even the most violent methods), but that is very different from saying that he was not a hero such as the story paints him. Any traces of mythology to be found in the Old Testament are far less elaborate. They may be said to be mere traces, either remains of an extinct system or rudiments that were never developed,—such as the references to the "sons of God and the daughters of men," Rahab, Leviathan, Tannin, and suchlike. These, it should be observed, as they lie before us in the books, are handled with perfect candour and simplicity, as if to the writers they had become divested of all dangerous or misleading associations, or were even nothing more than figures of speech. They may, in part, as Flöckner and Baethgen suggest, have been adopted from non-Hebraic sources, just as classical allusions are found in modern poets. I cannot in a brief note go as fully into the question as I should like, but I have a very strong impression that in the particular of the "Dawn," which Cheyne seems to think points to a whole system of early mythology, we have a crucial instance of the different mental attitudes of the Hebrew and Aryan races. I believe there is no Semitic heathen god of the dawn, nor in the Hebrew Scriptures any hint of the contest of light with darkness. The name of the dawn in Hebrew is indubitably based on the idea of *darkness*, so that the dawn is primarily the *Morgendämmerung*, not the *Morgenröthe*. I should say that we have an undoubted instance of its use in this sense in Joel ii. 2, "dawn spread upon the mountains" —an exact picture of the gloom caused by the cloud of locusts. And I venture to suggest to scholars the possibility of giving the same sense to the word in the much-discussed passage Isaiah viii. 20, which, without the supplying of a single word or any violence to grammar, might read, "To the law and to the testimony: should they not speak according to this word, which has no dimness?" The standing phrase the "dawn went up" may thus primarily mean the

rising up of the black cover of night, so that the sun, the *only* source of light, may appear; and if so, the passage in Job (xxxviii. 12 f.) would be all the more striking. The subject is worth more study than it seems to have received. Cheyne in his last commentary (The Book of Psalms) shows a growing tendency to notice myths or supposed myths alluded to or lying under Biblical expressions. When attention is at every turn drawn in this way to the eyelids of the dawn, the sides of the north, the sun as a bridegroom or strong man, the speech of the day, the gates of death, and so forth, and the mythological beliefs of other (even non-Semitic) peoples are adduced in connection, the ordinary reader can hardly be blamed for concluding that the Hebrew writers employing such expressions were on the level of heathen mythologisers. No doubt, the qualification is sometimes added that the myth is old or faded or primitive. But if so, how old is it? And what proof is there that it was ever more developed than we find it? And then, on this mode of interpretation, how much poetry will be left us? Religious language is always metaphorical; the crisis in the religious life of a people comes when either the metaphor is to run away with the thought, or the mind control the metaphor; and I maintain that the Hebrew writers, from the earliest point we can reach them, though saturated with poetry, are free from mythology in the ordinary sense. At all events, I would submit that these references are singularly out of place in a commentary, unless they are *historically* attested at the time of the writer. If it is the main object of a commentator to exhibit the mind of the writer commented on, nothing but confusion can arise from suggesting to the reader thoughts which could hardly have been in the writer's mind. It is all the more out of place when the literature under consideration is post-prophetic. Whatever may be said of the low level from which religious ideas among the Hebrews started, it will scarcely be maintained that they had a conscious belief in these nature-myths by the time of the exilic or post-exilic literature.

Note XVIII. p. 195.—David occupies so distinguished a position in the Biblical theory of the history that heroic measures have to be taken on the modern theory to explain his true standing. His personal character and the religion of his time are described by Renan in terms which it is not worth while to transcribe (Histoire du Peuple d'Israel, tom. ii. chap. i., v.) A word may here be said as to the ascription to him by the Biblical tradition of the gift of

song. (See above, p. 93.) Vatke, relying on Amos vi. 5, 6, says that the Davidic muse had scarcely the predominant religious tendency which a later age presupposed. And Robertson Smith goes the length of saying: "It is very curious that the book of Amos represents David as the chosen model of the *dilettanti* nobles of Ephraim, who lay stretched on beds of ivory, anointed with the choicest perfumes, and mingling music with their cups in the familiar manner of oriental luxury" (O. T. in the Jewish Church, p. 205). It is "very curious," certainly, that a learned professor should make such an assertion, for Amos does no such thing. All that the prophet says about David in this connection is, that the nobles in question "devise for themselves instruments of music like David." To make the comparison extend to the whole passage is monstrous. The prophet tells the luxurious nobles that they are enjoying everything *that is best* themselves, but "are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph"; and if there is any inference to be drawn as to David's musical attainments, it is this, that his instruments had the fame of being the *ne plus ultra* of their kind. There may be—probably there is—irony in the prophet's words, as one might describe as a Solomon a person who made great pretence to wisdom. When Isaiah utters a woe upon those who "are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink" (Isa. v. 22), he does not mean that all athletes are drunkards. The view of Amos in regard to the position of David in history is found in chap. ix. 11.

Note XIX. p. 259. — From the form of the question in Amos v. 25, and the emphatic position of the word "sacrifices" in the original, it may be concluded that the prophet expected a negative answer to the question, "Did ye offer sacrifices to me in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?" But this being admitted, the difficulties of the passage only begin. Did he mean to refer to the desert period as a good time, and imply—It was not sacrifice that constituted the good feature of Israel's behaviour then? Or did he mean to say that even in the desert they were a rebellious corrupt people, or a people under displeasure to such an extent that sacrifice would not have been accepted from them? Both Amos (ii. 10) and Hosea (ix. 10, xi. 1 ff.) refer to the time of the desert as one of favour shown by Jahaveh; but this is not inconsistent with the view that they were even then a rebellious and backsliding people, as even these prophets, as well as the historical writers, indicate. It may be, as Bredenkamp maintains, that the forty years is given

as a round number to indicate the greater part of the period—viz., thirty-eight years—when the people were under chastisement (see Deut. ix. 7 ff. ; Josh. v. 6), and excluding the two years spent about Sinai, when the legal system is represented as having been organised. Apart from this, however, the difficulties of the passage in the present connection begin at v. 26. For whereas some writers (as Daumer and Kuenen) see a reference to the past, and make the prophet declare that this idolatrous worship was practised in the desert, others (as Robertson Smith, König, Schrader, &c.) take the reference to be to the future, "So shall ye take up (viz., on the road to exile) the stake (or column) of your king, and the pedestal of your images," &c. (see Queen's Printer's Bible). Bredenkamp (Gesetz u. Propheten, p. 83 ff., who takes v. 26 to refer to the *past*) discusses the passage at some length. See also Robertson Smith, Prophets, pp. 140, 399 ; Wellhausen, Hist., p. 56 ; König, Hauptprobleme, p. 9. As to the idolatrous objects named, see Schrader, Cuneiform Inscriptions, Eng. tr., vol. ii. p. 141 f. Why is it, by the way, that Amos should be considered such an authority on the stars in this passage, and yet not be allowed to be the author of passages that speak of them in connection with Jahaveh's greatness? (Amos v. 8).

Note XX. p. 262.—Daumer, of course, makes a great deal of all these cases (pp. 26 ff.), arguing that the expression "before the Lord" denotes a formal religious act or ceremony of worship. It may be conceded that the expression has a religious reference—*i.e.*, that it was under a strong religious impulse that Samuel slew Agag, and that David thought he was performing a "religious duty," as we say, in giving up Saul's descendants to what was no doubt a cruel and unmerited fate. All this, however, is far from proving that human sacrifice was part of the recognised worship. That the sacredness of human life was not so great in the age of David and Samuel as to outweigh what was regarded as a sacred obligation or blood claim on the other side, need not surprise any one who believes in a progressive education in morality. When (not so long ago) men were hanged in this country for sheep-stealing, it was done in obedience to what were regarded as the sacred demands of justice. See Mozley's 'Ruling Ideas in Early Ages.'

Note XXI. p. 302.—The distinction between monotheism and monolatry is one that it is easy for us to draw. At the same time, the

important point in this discussion is whether the Israelites worshipped only one God, and what was the character they assigned to Him. It is quite probable that it never occurred to them to ask themselves what precisely were the gods of the nations around them; and, as is shown in the text, had they put such a question, they would very probably have been at a loss for an answer. We must not look in the Old Testament for what it does not profess to give. Max Müller speaks of a primitive intuition of God which he calls henotheism; which in itself is neither monotheistic nor polytheistic, though it might become either, according to the expression which it took in the languages of men (Selected Essays, vol. ii. p. 412 f.) His well-known explanation of the monotheistic turn of the Semitic races is that their languages enabled those using them to keep in memory the predicative or appellative sense of words, so that they did not run into *nomina*, which were confounded with *numina*. But the question always recurs, Whence this peculiar build of language, if not from the mind of those forming and employing it? So that the problem why the Semitic race (or a part of them) *thought* in this peculiar way, is no nearer solution on a merely philological basis. (Compare above, p. 189.)

Note XXII. pp. 313 and 338.—Stade also, though he speaks of an intimate relation between Jahaveh and Israel as subsisting from Mosaic times, yet maintains that the designation of this relation as a covenant cannot be proved anterior to the seventh century (Gesch., i. p. 507). The Hebrew word for covenant (בְּרִית) is no doubt etymologically connected with a verb (בָּרָה) to cut, and in its derivation, and in the usual connection with the verb כָּרַת (to cut), there is clear reference to sacrificial rites in connection with its ratification. (See Gen. xv. and Delitzsch's Comment.) Robertson Smith has pointed out the old Arab usages in this matter (Kinship and Marriage, p. 47 ff.; Religion of the Semites, 296 ff.) He says, however, very appositely, that "a nation like Israel is not a natural unity like a clan, and Jehovah, as the national God, was, from the time of Moses downward, no mere natural clan god, but the god of a confederation, so that here the idea of a covenant religion is entirely justified." He thus seems to take the original sense of the word as *συνθήκη*, with a reciprocal sense. Others, less properly, give it the sense of *διαθήκη*, from the idea of decision, determination, and then institution. Though this is not to be maintained, and though the obligations resting upon God, as one party to the covenant, may not

be brought into the foreground, as being understood, yet we cannot conceive of a covenant without obligations, in the form of commands, resting on man. Even Jeremiah's new covenant implies a law (Jer. xxxi. 33). See Bredenkamp, Gesetz und Propheten, p. 22, and his reff.

Note XXIII. p. 316.—It seems to be generally taken for granted, without proof, that the early Israelites knew little of the great outside world. Robertson Smith, *e.g.*, says of the times of Amos, "We are led to suppose that the very name of Assyria was unknown to the mass of the Hebrews" (Prophets, p. 91). He admits, however, that Amos himself knew with surprising exactness the history and geography of all the nations with whom the Hebrews had any converse; but instead of taking one man as the type of many, as he does in the case of Micah the image-maker in the book of Judges, he supposes that Amos had been a great traveller (ibid., p. 128 f.) For my part, I do not see any reason to think that Amos, who tells us plainly what his manner of life was, differed in this particular from the average man of his time. When the Franco-Prussian war was raging in Europe, there were numbers of Druze peasants in Lebanon, who had never been on a boat, inquiring eagerly day by day for news of the campaign, and following closely the fortunes of the combatants. Palestine was not so large a country, nor its people in those times so dull, that the great Phœnician trade could be carried on about their borders without their having some knowledge of the great world. Jeroboam was not the only adventurer that went from Palestine to Egypt, nor was Jonah the only Jewish youth that ran away to sea. It has generally been taken for granted that it was only after the advance westward of the Assyrian power about the eighth century that Israel came to know of the great Eastern world (Knobel, Die Bücher Numeri, &c., p. 579); but are we to believe that a people who traced the origin of Abraham to the East supposed that all that region had disappeared, or ceased to talk about it? The tenacity with which old traditions cling to the oriental mind is illustrated by the fact that the inhabitants of Syria at the present day speak of the Russians as *Muskōbi* or Muscovites, a recollection of the period when Moscow was the capital (although the name Russia is known to old writers). And I would offer the conjecture for whatever it may be worth, that the name of Babel (for Babylon) retained similarly its hold on the Israelite memory as a designation of the

great Eastern country, in which the supremacy oscillated between Babylon and Assyria. Schrader tells us (Cuneiform Inscriptions, on Genesis xxxvi. 31) that the name Israel does not occur in the Inscriptions as a general name for the Israelites, nor does it appear, as a rule, as the name of the northern kingdom, the designation of which is usually "land of the house of Omri." This fact is full of suggestiveness as to the way in which "sources" may be used.

Note XXIV. pp. 336, 369.—One of those general statements made without reflection on its foundation or significance, is that the Israelites who left Egypt at the exodus were a horde of slaves. We must, no doubt, accept it as the best evidence of their servitude there that the national consciousness of a people otherwise proud of their freedom, retained so vivid a recollection of their hard bondage and of the "high hand" by which they were delivered. Stade's off-hand dictum that if any Hebrew clan ever sojourned in Egypt no one knows its name, is (not to speak of the difficulty of finding traces of the Hyksos themselves in Egypt) opposed to the whole testimony of the nation, and, besides, leaves no room for the development of the pre-prophetic ideas which he himself is so fond of tracing. But if we admit that the sojourn of the people in Egypt was a historical fact, we must consider what it implies. The things that make the deepest impression on the memory are not necessarily those that make the most lasting impression on character. Although their life was at one time made "bitter in mortar and in bricks, and in all manner of service in the field," we are not to suppose that this went on from generation to generation. Even during the time of this hard service it is probable, judging by the customs of forced labour in the East, and hints in the Hebrew narrative, that they were far from being, as perhaps the popular conception represents them, an unorganised gang of slaves. They would be arranged and drawn for labour by their families and under their own chief or heads (Exod. v. 14 ff.) And we know not what amount of organisation they had reached, or what experience of ordinary life they had gained during a residence of several generations in a country like Egypt. The Egyptian *fellahîn* in the time of Mehemet Ali were probably as much oppressed as the ancient Israelites. Yet, with an army of such men, forced into the ranks, and fed on black bread and onions, Ibrahîm Pasha drove the Turks from Syria. "The History of Israel," says Delitzsch (Introd. to his Commentary on Genesis), "does not begin with the condition of

an ignorant, rude, and undisciplined horde, but with the transition to a nation of a race which had come to maturity amidst the most abundant means and examples of culture." He points out also the influence of the legalism and multiformity of Egyptian national and private life as seen in the laws of the Pentateuch; and dates from the sojourn in Egypt the first impulse to literary activity among the Hebrews. I do not know that there is anything incredible in the supposition that the book of the Covenant may be the codification of law and custom that prevailed even in Egypt (The Kingdom of all Israel, by James Sime, 1883, chap. v. This is a book that no doubt will be considered wild by critics, but is deserving of attention for the intelligent and honest effort to treat the Old Testament by the same rules of historical research as have "been applied in verifying the literature of Greece and Rome").

Note XXV. p. 344.—There is another passage in Hosea which may be referred to in this connection, not so much because of the positive evidence which it furnishes, as because it has been explained away by those who maintain that at the time of that prophet the Levitical aspect of the law is scarcely perceivable. In Hosea iv. 4 we read, "Thy people are as they that strive with the priest;" and advocates of the early existence of the Deuteronomic Code see in it a reference to Deut. xvii. 12, where it is said, "The man that doeth presumptuously is not hearkening unto the priest, . . . even that man shall die." On the other hand, the advocates of the late production of the Levitical Code, and of the lateness of the priestly authority generally, seek to explain the passage as if it contained a false or corrupt reading. I think that the explanation given by them of the expression, "As they that strive with the priest," is very frigid and weak; and I am prepared to defend the reading on purely grammatical and literary grounds. The construction of the particle *kaph* (meaning *like*) with a participle is found in Hosea in so marked a manner that it may be said to be an *usus loquendi* of that prophet. Thus in one passage (v. 10) he says, "The princes of Judah are like them that remove the landmark;" and in another place (xi. 4), "I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws;" and in another passage (vi. 9), "Like the waylayers of men." Cf. also the expression, "Like the dew that early goeth away" (vi. 4). Such a usage as this, I think, guarantees the reading when there is no external evidence against it, and the expression, moreover, read as it stands, fits the context better than the reading pro-

posed. See Robertson Smith's discussion of the passage, Prophets, p. 405 f.

Note XXVI. p. 383.—Not only is it the case that the dates of the "sources" are variously given by various critics, and that two at least of the sources (J and E) present a hitherto insoluble problem, but it is plain that critics like Dillmann and Nöldeke have come to very different conclusions as to the development of the history from the school of Wellhausen and Kuenen. Quite recently, too, we have had Klostermann putting forward a revolutionary view as to the original documents (Neue Kirkl. Zeitschr., i. 618 ff., 693 ff. Compare Presbyterian and Reformed Review, April 1891). And not to speak of the small school represented by M. Vernes, the articles of Halévy appearing in the 'Revue des Études Juives' show that he is far from accepting the current conclusions of criticism. If it should come to be accepted—as the discoveries of archæology and the failures of criticism seem to indicate that it will—that literary activity was much older and more common in Israel than is now admitted, we shall probably the better understand how, side by side with the growth and modification of religious observances, there went on a rewriting and modification of books; which is, on all points of view, a more likely thing than the supposition of literature produced in the mass for certain specific temporary purposes. As to the dating very far apart of documents that now lie side by side, the critics themselves see no incongruity in two contemporaneous prophets, Amos and Hosea, the one saying nothing against the calves, and the other making them the very root of Israel's sin (R. Smith, Prophets, p. 175). Nay, they find in the person of Jeremiah two tendencies on this subject of law that are quite contradictory (see chap. xvii. p. 451). I will venture to add that the mode of composition, and transition from one style to another seen frequently in oriental authors, should be a warning not to push the "separation of sources" too far. Lane incidentally (Modern Egyptians, 5th ed., vol. i. p. 271 f.) furnishes an example, which could be paralleled by quotations from almost any Arabic author. He gives a long passage taken down to the dictation of his informant, and relating a vision of the prophet which was given to one Mohammed el-Bahaee to settle a difficult matter of tradition. The narrator first relates his vision, apparently in fullest detail, till he "awoke from sleep joyful and happy." He then goes on to tell how he visited his teacher to report the occurrence, and in this relation brings in quite a new set of details that were not

hinted at in the first narrative. The two accounts show so much variety that they could easily be ascribed to different writers, and it would be very easy to make out that the latter is very much later than the former. But, indeed, the Koran itself, uniform as it is above most Arab works, exhibits quite a number of styles and not a few divergent tendencies.

Note XXVII. p. 495.—A few words may here be said on the view of Wellhausen and his school that "the kingdom which bore the name of Israel was actually in point of fact in the olden time the proper Israel, and Judah was merely a kind of appendage to it" (Hist. of Israel, p. 188). Robertson Smith of course repeats the statement, even to the corroborative proof of the cedar of Lebanon overshadowing the thistle that grows at its foot (2 Kings xiv. 9; Prophets, pp. 93, 137). The remark might be allowed to pass if it referred merely to political importance, for the northern kingdom was larger and nearer to the great powers that moulded history in those days. Yet happy is the people that has no history. The dynastic changes and internal troubles of the northern kingdom are in strange contrast with the long quiet reigns of the southern kingdom; and from this point of view the sweeping statement of Wellhausen is *a priori* improbable—viz., that "religiously the relative importance of the two corresponded pretty nearly to what it was politically and historically." Israel, he says, "was the cradle of prophecy; Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha exercised their activity there. What contemporary figure from Judah is there to place alongside of these?" Why, Samuel belongs to the undivided kingdom, a proof, even if we had not stronger ones, that the cradle of prophecy is not to be located on geographical considerations. And who were Nathan and Gad; and where did Amos come from? Isaiah himself cannot be a sudden apparition in Judah. The quiet of the little southern state, the prestige of Jerusalem, the disposition to rest on the past, all speak for Jerusalem as the centre of religious life, and for the Davidic house as, in religious regard, something quite different from the northern kingdom. Palestine is not so large, nor were the boundaries of the two kingdoms so firmly set by nature, that the mere distance of a few miles could make much difference in the social and religious condition of the people. Yet the tone of the northern prophets, who seem to have had before them a worship full of idolatry, differs so much from that of the prophets of the south, who reprove the people for too much attention to forms, that we

must recognise a difference in the religious associations and standing of the two kingdoms.

Note XXVIII., p. 427.—In Cheyne's Jeremiah, His Life and Times, pp. 69-86, the English reader will find in an accessible and comprehensive form a statement of the main critical positions in regard to the date and authorship of Deuteronomy. It does not fall within the scope of the present work to enter into critical questions as to the composition of books, and I have stated my reasons for believing that the Biblical theory of the history is not inconsistent with the supposition of a late date for the book of Deuteronomy. A good many of the statements of Professor Cheyne are, I think, quite controvertible; but I can only refer briefly to one or two points bearing on the theory of the history. For instance, he does not seem to take any account of the possibility of one in Moses' position foreseeing (in the ordinary and literal sense of the word) what was most likely to happen after the occupation of Canaan. And when he tells us that the author of Deuteronomy "is full of allusions to circumstances which did not exist till long after Moses" (p. 71), and, guided by such allusions, brings the date later and later down till he reaches the age of Manasseh or Josiah, he somewhat invalidates his own argument by adding that, after the promulgation of Deuteronomy, "even very near Jerusalem the reformation was but slight" (p. 73). For it is always open to the objector to argue that, if breaches of the law are found after the solemn national adoption of it, the earlier "circumstances" alluded to are no proof that, at the time of their occurrence, such a law had not been promulgated. What I particularly dispute, however, is the statement that the fundamental idea of the holy people is Isaiah's, and that "it was that great prophet's function to transfer the conception of holiness from the physical to the moral sphere" (p. 73). Such a statement, even with the qualification added to it that "others had laboured in the same direction," is to my mind altogether inadequate, in view of the writings of Amos and Hosea, the book of the Covenant, and anything that can at all be ascribed to Moses himself. Whether the word be there or not, the idea of a people *separated* from other nations in belief and practice, and constituted as a people on an ethical basis, is fundamental and Mosaic; and it is only on such a supposition that it can be asserted with any proper significance that Deuteronomy is in spirit Mosaic. But, indeed, is it not conceivable that this Deuteronomic spirit was a thing of

development and growth, having its germ in the Mosaic religion, and, instead of appearing for the first time in one late age, coming to maturity in the course of the history? In other words, instead of saying that Deuteronomy speaks as its authors supposed Moses would have spoken had he been alive, and that it abolished things which Moses might have tolerated in his own day, but would have condemned had he lived later (p. 78 f.), I think we get a more reasonable view of the matter if we suppose that it is the final expression, in the light of history, of views that had been germinating in the minds of good men from the days of Moses, the exposition of principles so firmly rooted in their minds that the writers in all sincerity regarded them as Mosaic. It is one thing to ascribe to early times an institution which exists and has long existed, or an idea or tone of thought which is well defined and deeply rooted; it is not so easy to conceive of this being done with institutions newly set up, or ideas for the first time formulated. This distinction would, I think, help materially to explain the success of Josiah's reformation, as it would also remove the necessity for the ascription of any fraud or delusion, or even illusion, to those who were its prominent agents. I believe it would also explain the Deuteronomic colouring, as it is called, which is found in other books. Cheyne speaks of "the school of writers formed upon the book of Deuteronomy—a school which includes historians, poets, and prophets, and without which the Old Testament would be deprived of some of its most valued pages" (p. 68). It is not so very obvious how a school could be formed upon a book. A book issuing from a school is at least as conceivable; and the fact that the school embraced "historians, poets, and prophets," would lead us to suppose that it was of more gradual growth, under influences wider and more fundamental than a book. Even if we explain the school by the existence of the book, the book itself has to be accounted for, with characteristics sufficient to give rise to a school.

Note XXIX. p. 432.—The linguistic comparison of the various books or sources lies quite beyond the subject which I set before myself; and I have already indicated my doubts whether this kind of argument goes very far to determine the actual dates of the compositions, much less to determine the order of historical events. The student will find the linguistic peculiarities of the Hexateuch fully stated in Dillmann's Commentaries on those books, and in his summary statement, 'Ueber die Composition des Hexateuch' at the close

of the series. Delitzsch's new Commentary on Genesis also takes note of them; and of course, in Kuenen's Hexateuch, they are produced in detail. A special work on the subject is Ryssel's 'De Elohistæ Pentateuchici Sermone' (1878), which is criticised by Kayser in 'Jahrb. für Prot. Theol.,' 1881. Riehm treated the subject also in 'Stud. u. Krit.,' 1872, and is criticised by Wellhausen in Bleek's 'Einleitung,' 4te Aufl., p. 173 ff. There is a discussion by Klostermann of the relation of Ezekiel to the law of holiness (Levit. xviii.-xxvi.) in 'Zeitschr. für luth. Theol.,' 1877. Strack gives a brief statement of a conservative view in Zöckler's 'Handbuch' (1883), vol. i. p. 138 ff.; and Giesebrecht has an important discussion of the subject (Die Sprachgebrauch des hexat. Elohisten) in Stade's 'Zeitschr. für Alttest. Wissensch.,' 1881. Ryssel, who has been much criticised, concludes that it cannot be asserted that the Elohist is later in date than the exile. Bredenkamp, while laying less stress on the linguistic argument, comes also to the conclusion that no part of the Elohistic Torah was produced in the period of the language succeeding Malachi; and he points out, in particular, the contrasts it presents to the language of Ezekiel (Gesetz. u. Proph., p. 17). F. E. König, to whom I have acknowledged my indebtedness in these pages, has a special treatise, 'De criticæ sacræ argumento e linguæ legibus repetito' (1879); and he gives also a very comprehensive statement of the whole question as to the order and relation of the various documents in his 'Offenbarungsbegriff des Alten Testaments' (1882), vol. ii. p. 321 ff. He declares himself an adherent of the view of Reuss and Graf that the Priestly Code is later than Ezekiel; yet he strenuously asserts that the historical order, law and prophets, is to be maintained, and says that the Grafian hypothesis does not involve a denial of this order. His own position is that Moses received a veritably supernatural revelation, that through him God brought Israel in a miraculous manner out of Egypt, and concluded a covenant with Israel at Sinai, where the foundations were laid of Israel's ordinances for religion, morals, worship, and daily life (p. 333). As to the extent to which König differs from the prevailing school, it may be mentioned that he defends the Mosaic origin of the tabernacle (ibid.), and holds that the absence of mention of the Great Day of Atonement in Nehemiah is no proof that the law relating to that institution was not then known (p. 331). The laws relating to worship which he regards as belonging to the original Mosaic legislation are, besides the prohibition of images and the Sabbath law (which are in the Decalogue itself): the erection of altars wherever God recorded

His name, along with which, however, the tent or tabernacle as chief sanctuary; a priestly tribe of Levi, with high priest at its head; offerings of animals and fruits, as burnt-offerings and thank-offerings; the Sabbath; new moon; three collective festivals, &c. (p. 347). It is but just to a careful worker like König to present this enumeration (and the "&c." is added by himself); for the conclusion involved in regard to the history and the credibility of the documents differs widely from that of most of the critical writers whose views we have considered. It might be suggested that if König is willing to believe in the antiquity of some institutions in regard to which the history is silent, he might have been content to accept the statements of the priestly writers as to others. At all events, if all the institutions he mentions are Mosaic, it is evident that an equally ancient terminology and diction must have existed (in priestly circles at least) in regard to them. But, as I have already indicated, I cannot profess to have arrived at any certainty on such matters, and therefore do not hazard conjecture on the subject.

Note XXX. p. 435.—One or two instances of this style of proof may be given—it is evident that it may be carried to any length: (*a*) The cities of refuge are not of early institution, but the law in regard to them arose out of the old Bamoth. That is to say, an altar used to be a place of asylum, but when a multiplicity of altars was abolished something had to come in their place. (See Well., Hist., pp. 161-163.) Places thus set apart formed the germ of the idea of Levitical cities, and the compilers of the Priestly Code went on in their usual way to trace them back to Moses, imagining a condition of things neither known nor workable in their own days. (*b*) In Deut. there are references to the monarchy, but none in the Priestly Code. The conclusion that used to be drawn was that the Priestly Code was older than the monarchy. On Wellhausen's theory, however, that the historical sphere of the Priestly Code is one "created by itself out of its own legal premises" (p. 39), the silence as to a king is explicable by the fact that it belongs to a time when the monarchy had disappeared, and the high priest was the chief magistrate. The so-called theocracy of the pre-monarchical period is just, in short, a reading backward into history of the hierocracy of post-exilian times—p. 148 ff. (*c*) According to Exod. xxx. the expenses of the Temple worship are met directly out of the poll-tax levied from the community, which can only be explained by the fact that at that

time there had ceased to be any sovereign—p. 80. (*d*) "One might perhaps hazard the conjecture that if in the wilderness legislation of the [Levitical] Code there is no trace of agriculture being regarded as the basis of life, which it still is in Deut. and even in the kernel of Levit. xvii.-xxvi., this also is a proof that the Code belongs to a very recent rather than to a very early period, when agriculture was *no longer* rather than *not yet*. With the Babylonian captivity the Jews lost their fixed seats, and so became a trading people"—p. 108.

Note XXXI. p. 465.—I have purposely avoided making any reference to the book of Joel, although much might be said in favour of its pre-exilic and early date. I will not say that it is on account of their theory of the late origin of the Priestly Code that most of the modern critics relegate this book to post-exilic times, or even that the theory in question, taken strictly, requires this. Yet, seeing that the date of the book is so much disputed, and that so much, if anything at all, would have to be said on the subject, I prefer to leave it altogether out of account, as I have practically done in regard to the Psalter.

Note XXXII. p. 469.—It may be thought that I have given more importance than their views demand to the small school represented by M. Vernes, and also that the extreme positions of Daumer and Ghillany are not worthy of consideration at the present time. It is, however, to be noted that many of the views of these older writers are put forth by modern critics, and on the same grounds; and it is but fair to M. Vernes to say that his chief objection to the prevailing school is that their method is *insufficient*. He professes to carry out to their legitimate conclusion the principles on which they proceed; and if, as it seems to me, the critical "circles" to which Wellhausen refers (Hist., p. 9) are concentric, we are entitled to look at the operation of central principles. It may not be agreeable to the prevailing school to be called traditionalists; yet M. Vernes has some right to ask, if the recollection of the period immediately preceding Saul and David has almost completely disappeared, how any one can be justified in going back centuries beyond that dim period, and talking of migrations of pre-Abrahamic peoples and suchlike matters which are shrouded in impenetrable darkness (Résultats, &c., p. 42 f.) So it seems to me he is only carrying out the principles of the prevailing school when he points out that the (so-called) pre-exilic prophets have the exile, the restoration, and the spread of religion among

the heathen so clearly in their view, that the books must have been written after these events had happened or become possible (p. 213 ff.) Scepticism must always be prepared to meet scepticism; and when critics triumphantly tell us that Amos declares that the Israelites did not sacrifice in the wilderness, and Jeremiah informs us distinctly that God never commanded sacrifice, and therefore the controversy as to the early legislation on that subject is ended, it is always open to the objector to ask what information Amos or Jeremiah had about times so remote that was not possessed by their contemporaries. Again, Daumer claims to be consistent and thorough; for he not only proves the *original* fire and Moloch worship of Israel from the same texts that Kuenen relies upon, but concludes, from a passage of similar tenor in Jeremiah (xlvi. 10; comp. Isa. xxxiv. 6 ff.), that this was to the *last* a recognised legal service (Feuer und Molochdienst, p. 25). Not without reason M. Vernes says (Pref., p. iii), "If erudition is an excellent and indispensable thing, it cannot take the place of method." Prof. Briggs tells us that "higher criticism is exact and thorough in its methods" (Bib. Study, p. 194). I can perceive the thoroughness; the exactness is not so apparent.

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